



THE

F A L L O F S O M E R S E T.

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THE
FALL OF SOMERSET.

Book the Second.

EDWARD THE SIXTH.

I.

THE YOUNG KING AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE.

NEARLY three weeks had elapsed since the Earl of Warwick's return from Norwich, and during that interval the conspiracy we described as being already formed against the Protector had made considerable progress. Meetings had been held at Ely House, Holborn, between Warwick, Northampton, and others of the Council, at which resolutions were agreed upon, but as yet nothing had been done.

The grand object of the conspirators was to carry off the young king, who was now with his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, at Hampton Court Palace, and jealously guarded by him; but the attempt was deferred till success should be certain.

Though ignorant of its extent, the Protector was aware of the plot, and knew who was at its head, but hoped to defeat it. He had not fully calculated Warwick's power, which was now as great as his own, if not greater.

Somerset was scarcely conscious how unpopular he had become with the nobles during the recent insurrections in Norwich and Exeter, and the amnesty just published by him completed their dissatisfaction. Gladly would they have seen his overthrow, and Warwick put in his place.

Other causes had contributed to the Pro-

tector's general unpopularity. The execution of his brother, the admiral, had created a strong feeling against him, in which even the lower orders shared; and the unbounded extravagance he had displayed in the erection of Somerset House, the materials for which were supplied by the parish church of Saint Mary's and other ecclesiastical edifices, alienated great numbers of his adherents.

Still, though all seemed against him, the Protector was omnipotent.

While he had charge of the young king, his nephew, he had nothing to fear. He, therefore, guarded him carefully, and no longer brought him to Whitehall or Greenwich, but kept him at Hampton Court, intending to take him to Windsor Castle, where he had sent part of the lansquenets on their return from Norwich.

He had also written to Lord Russell and Sir William Herbert, who were at Andover with a large force, directing them to bring it to Windsor for the king's defence.

The Duchess of Somerset was at Hampton Court at the time, and by her advice several of the household who were in immediate attendance on the king were removed, as she suspected their fidelity, and their places supplied by others on whom the duke could rely.

Among the duchess's own attendants was Margaret Flowerdew. Her grace had seen Margaret when she besought an interview with the Protector, and was so much pleased with her that she would not allow her to depart.

Augustin Stewart was equally fortunate. When he arrived at Hampton Court he was presented by Margaret to the duchess, and

by her grace to the Protector, who, being struck by his good looks and intelligence, offered him a post in the household, which Augustin delightedly accepted.

The young man speedily attracted the attention of the king, and from the notice bestowed upon him by Edward, promised to become a great favourite with his youthful majesty.

Augustin had not been long in the royal household when he was employed in a difficult and dangerous errand.

Suspecting that Warwick and his confederates really designed to carry off the king, and anxious to ascertain the truth, the Protector sent Augustin to make secret inquiries.

The young man went to Ely House, and mingling with the armed retainers collected in the court during a meeting of the con-

spirators, easily ascertained that their design was to secure the royal person. But he could not discover precisely in what manner the plan was to be executed.

On his return to Hampton Court he saw the Protector alone in his cabinet, and told him all he had learnt.

“In my opinion, his majesty will be safest at Windsor Castle,” he said. “Those who spoke of the matter seemed to think it would not be difficult to take him from this palace.”

“Were it not for the danger to which the king would be exposed, I almost wish the attempt might be made,” observed the Protector. “It would justify me in any measures I may choose to adopt against the Earl of Warwick.”

“But if the Earl of Warwick should suc-

ceed, what will your grace do then ?" remarked Augustin.

"He cannot succeed!" cried the Protector.

"I do not desire to magnify the danger, your grace," said Augustin; " but the Earl of Warwick's followers entertain a very different notion. If the king stays here to-night, I think the guard ought to be doubled."

"Surely you do not suppose the palace will be attacked ?" cried the Protector.

"I recommend caution, your grace," said Augustin.

"Nay, if danger is really to be apprehended, I must have a party of horse from Windsor," said the duke. " You shall fetch them."

"I am ready to start at once, your grace," replied Augustin.

The Protector then rose from his seat, and went forth into the gallery with Augustin.

He intended to proceed at once to the court-yard, but was stopped by perceiving the young king advancing towards him.

Edward had a book in his hand, to which he occasionally referred, and was walking between two grave-looking personages, both of whom wore gowns. These were his tutors, Sir John Cheke and Doctor Cox, who had made him the marvellous scholar he had become.

Though at this time only twelve years of age, yet, from his remarkable gravity and composure, Edward looked some two or three years older.

He had shot up somewhat too quickly, as was shown by his slender but beautifully-formed figure, and had a soft, gentle, almost

seraphic expression of countenance. His complexion was pale and delicate—too pale, perhaps, for health ; his eyes large and blue, and his hair golden. His manner was singularly gracious and winning.

The costume of the young king, which displayed his slight, graceful figure to the greatest advantage, consisted of a blue velvet doublet curiously embroidered with silver, over which he wore a velvet gown, with white satin sleeves.

Hose of white silk, and buskins of white velvet, richly embroidered. On his head a small blue velvet cap, adorned with pearls and bordered with an ostrich feather. From his girdle hung a tiny poniard and a velvet purse.

A strong contrast to the boy monarch was his grave-looking uncle, the Lord Protector.

Tall, stately, dignified, with fine features, and a towering forehead, from which the hair had early fallen, the Duke of Somerset had a very striking physiognomy.

The hue of his skin was pallid, and his expression melancholy and somewhat stern. By those who loved him not, it was said he had never smiled since he had induced his royal nephew to sign the warrant for the admiral's execution.

The duke was habited in a purple velvet doublet, over which he wore a gown of the same material, embroidered with Venice gold, and having purple satin sleeves ruffled at the hand. Hose of tawny silk, and buskins of tawny velvet. Round his knee the Garter, and from his neck, in a gold chain, the lesser George.

Advancing towards the young king, he made a profound obeisance, and Augustin

followed his example, though remaining at a distance.

“I was coming to your cabinet anon, sweet uncle,” said Edward, in his charming boyish accents. “I have a favour to ask of you.”

“'Tis granted ere 'tis asked,” replied the Protector.

“I will not bind you to your promise, gentle uncle,” said Edward. “But I would fain visit London to-morrow.”

“Visit London!” exclaimed the Protector, surprised. “What has put this notion into your majesty’s head?”

“If I go not near them, the good citizens will think themselves neglected,” replied the king. “'Tis long since I have been at Whitehall. Let us go thither by water, gentle uncle.”

“It cannot be,” rejoined the Protector,

coldly. “Your majesty must give up the idea.”

Edward looked annoyed.

“There are several cogent reasons why you should not go,” pursued the duke.

“But I will go!” cried Edward, authoritatively, and with a faint resemblance of his father’s manner.

“Listen to me, I pray, your majesty,” said the Protector. “Some disputes with the Council must be settled before you can return to Whitehall.”

“Do those disputes relate to ourself?” asked Edward.

The Protector made no reply, evidently not desiring to enter into an explanation.

“Speak, uncle,” said Edward. “If there is ought we should hear, keep it not from us.”

“I did not mean to trouble your majesty

with the matter at this moment," said the Protector ; but a most dangerous conspiracy has been formed among certain members of the Council, the object of which is to depose me."

"To depose you, uncle?" cried the king in astonishment. "Wherefore would they depose you?"

"Because I have served your majesty too well," replied the Protector. "These traitorous lords, at the head of whom is the Earl of Warwick, hate me, and seek my destruction, because I will not allow them an undue control over your majesty, well knowing it would be greatly to your disadvantage. But I fear them not, being strong in the rectitude of my conduct. I have faithfully carried out the intentions of the king, your august father, and shall pursue a like course till your majesty

attains your majority, when my duties will cease."

"I am entirely satisfied with what you have done, dear uncle," said Edward, taking his hand, and pressing it gratefully. "No one, I feel, could have had my true interest more at heart than yourself. No one, I am sure, could have discharged the duties of your high office more efficiently. But I can easily understand that these discontented nobles—for I like not to call them traitors—may think they have not had sufficient access to us; nay, they may sometimes have deemed themselves slighted. For instance, I have not yet seen the Earl of Warwick since his return from Norwich. He may imagine that I think little of his victory over the rebels."

"Warwick has been otherwise occupied," said the duke. "Ever since his return

he has been engaged in his plot against me. Secret meetings of part of the Council, not the whole, have been held at Ely House, where they have considered in what manner they could remove your majesty from my charge."

"Forcibly remove me?" cried Edward.

"Ay, forcibly remove you, my liege!" said the duke.

"I did not suppose they would dare to proceed to such a length," said Edward, in amazement.

"Tell his majesty what you heard yesterday at Ely House," said the duke, bidding Augustin step forward.

"Who were present at the meeting?" demanded the king.

"The Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Southampton, the Lord Chancellor Rich,

the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Huntingdon, and the Marquis of Northampton," replied Augustin.

" You saw them ?" said the king.

" I stood among their armed retainers, my liege, and saw them enter the hall."

" Did you hear what passed at their conference ?" demanded the king.

" No, my liege; but I was told by one who was present that they have determined to carry off your majesty from the Lord Protector."

" You hear, my liege ?" cried Somerset. " But you need have no uneasiness. Such precautions shall be taken as will effectually prevent the execution of their treasonable design. It was not my intention to disclose it to your majesty till the danger should be past. Now, sir," he added to

Augustin, “you can set out to Windsor Castle for the additional guard.”

With a profound obeisance to the king, the young man then departed.

II.

SHOWING WHO WERE STAYING WITH THE KING AT
HAMPTON COURT.

SEVERAL important personages now entered the gallery.

These were Archbishop Cranmer, Sir William Paget, the two Secretaries of State Sir William Petre and Sir Thomas Smith, with William Cecil, then secretary to the Lord Protector.

It may be necessary to mention that Sir William Petre, though professing the utmost devotion to the Duke of Somerset,

was an adherent of the Earl of Warwick, and in secret communication with the conspirators ; that Paget and Cranmer were wavering ; and that the Protector's only staunch friends were Sir Thomas Smith and Cecil.

Exceedingly crafty, Sir William Petre acted with so much dissimulation that he completely imposed upon the duke, and he was now endeavouring to detach from his grace Cranmer and Paget. Petre's countenance did not betray his subtle and intriguing character, his expression being frank and open, and his manner extremely plausible.

Although Cranmer owed much to the Duke of Somerset, he did not allow his feelings of gratitude to interfere with his private interest ; and being apprehensive of the duke's overthrow by his enemies, he

was considering how it would be best to act under the circumstances.

Attached to Somerset, from whom he had received numerous favours, Sir William Paget was prepared to fall from him—if he was likely to be deposed.

Both Sir Thomas Smith and Cecil were extremely uneasy, for they fully comprehended the dangerous character of the plot against the duke; but they had no thought of abandoning him in his difficulties.

All these important personages were now staying at Hampton Court, and in attendance upon the king, and constituted the Council, of which the Protector was the head.

Whether judiciously or not, Edward had been kept in entire ignorance of all that was going on amid the hostile faction.

His tutors were constantly with him, and

carefully obeyed the Protector's instructions. All suspected attendants, as we have said, had been removed, and the others were jealously watched by the duchess. Thus the young king knew nothing, except what it was deemed prudent to tell him.

On their entrance into the gallery, Cranmer and the others had been joined by Sir John Cheke and Doctor Cox, and the whole party moved towards the king, with the archbishop at their head.

Cranmer had a dignified deportment, and though the expression of his countenance was severe, it was not devoid of benevolence. He was habited in a long white gown, over which he wore a plain white surplice, with a black stole folded round the neck and hanging down over the breast. His head was covered by a plain black silk coif, above which was a black cap.

The two chaplains who attended him, but followed at a respectful distance, were similarly attired.

Sir William Paget and the others were all very richly attired in doublets and gowns of velvet and satin of various hues, with silken hose and slashed buskins, and presented a very splendid appearance.

Each had a couple of richly-clad attendants with him, but these did not advance beyond the gallery door, where several halberdiers were stationed.

Waiting till Cranmer had come within a certain distance, Edward advanced, and, bending reverently, received the archbishop's benediction.

A like greeting passed between the Lord Protector and Cranmer; and as soon as the customary ceremonies were over, Sir William Petre remarked to the duke:

“I fear your grace has had bad news to-day?”

“It has not come upon me unexpectedly,” replied Somerset. “For some time I have been aware that Warwick and others of the Council have been conspiring against me.”

“To me the intelligence has occasioned the greatest surprise,” said Petre. “I cannot understand the motive of their complaints, being well assured your grace has perfectly fulfilled all the duties of your high office.”

“I can bear testimony to that,” said Sir Thomas Smith. “But the best testimony is borne by his majesty himself. Should we behold our youthful king as he is now, a marvel for his years, learned, accomplished, pious, unless he had been most admirably trained? I trow not. His majesty

owes much to the Lord Protector, who has made him what he is."

"And he is the first to acknowledge his obligations," said Edward, taking the duke's hand. "My good uncle has fully carried out my august sire's intentions respecting me."

"Your majesty more than repays me for all I have done or endeavoured to do," said the duke, profoundly touched. "I care not what construction may be put upon my conduct by my enemies, knowing I have acted for the best. I have good reason to be proud that your majesty has been brought up under my care."

"And I have equal reason to be satisfied, good uncle," said the king, with a grateful look.

"With such sentiments as your majesty has expressed," observed Cranmer, "it is

truly to be regretted that the Lord Protector's actions should have been so greatly misjudged."

"Your grace says truly. It is so," said the king.

"I have been judged by my enemies," said Somerset.

"And they have judged you wrongfully, as must be evident to all," said the archbishop. "Nevertheless, in the interests of peace, I earnestly recommend your grace—if it be possible—to enter into some amicable compromise with them."

"Never!" rejoined the duke, sternly. "They shall be punished for their disobedience! As the representative of the late king I have full power, and they shall find I will exercise it! Warwick shall lower his bold front! He has threatened me, and shall feel I am his master!"

“ ‘Tis me he has threatened, methinks, good uncle,” observed the king.

“ True,” replied Somerset; “ and he shall ask pardon of your majesty on his bended knee. He is a traitor.”

“ Nay; do not denounce him in such terms, I pray your grace!” cried Petre.

“ I say again he is a traitor,” exclaimed Somerset. “ He seeks to carry off the king from his appointed guardian. What greater treason can be meditated? Do you defend him?”

“ No,” cried Sir Thomas Smith. “ If he has indeed contemplated this crime, he deserves death.”

“ And if it be proved against him, he shall assuredly die on the scaffold,” said Somerset.

Some murmurs followed this speech.

“ ‘Tis not well to provoke a powerful enemy, your grace,” remarked Petre.

“ I do not despair that the misunderstanding—for such I must account it—may yet be arranged,” said Cranmer.

“ ‘Tis my wish that it should be so,” observed Edward, looking earnestly at the Protector.

“ Impossible, your majesty!” cried Somerset. “ These traitors have gone too far. They must be punished, or the heinous offence will be repeated.”

Just then a gentleman usher belonging to the royal household approached the duke, and making a profound reverence, delivered a letter to him.

“ Whence comes this letter?” demanded Somerset, taking the usher aside.

“ The messenger who brought it,” re-

plied the officer, in an undertone, “stated that it was a summons to your grace from the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Southampton, and other Lords of the Council.”

“A summons to me!” exclaimed the duke, angrily. “Is the insolent fellow detained?”

“He did not dismount, your grace,” replied the usher, “but rode off as soon as he had delivered the letter.

III.

THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET.

So enraged was the Protector, that without considering that many curious eyes were upon him, he tore open the missive, and showed by his countenance that its contents were highly displeasing to him.

He was still gazing at it, when a gentle touch on the elbow caused him to turn round, and he beheld the duchess. He had not noticed her approach.

No one had so much control over him

as she had, and the look she fixed upon him instantly recalled him to his senses, and showed him how imprudently he was acting.

Not only was the Duchess of Somerset exceedingly handsome, but possessed of great ability, and she was of infinite assistance to her lord, though it was said she sometimes asserted her supremacy too conspicuously. Be this as it may, she had served him well on many occasions, though she had led him into some quarrels.

She was the Protector's second spouse, and daughter of Sir Edward Stanhope of Sudley. Her attire was magnificent; her gown of richest brocade, and her stomacher ornamented with pearls and precious stones.

Generally, the duchess was attended by three or four *demoiselles d'honneur*, but on

this occasion she had only Margaret Flowerdew with her. The fair damsels was simply dressed, but looked extremely well. She remained at a distance, while the duchess conversed with the Lord Protector.

“Your grace is watched,” said the duchess. “Be cautious.”

“It matters not,” replied the Protector. “The contents of this letter will serve my purpose. ‘Tis a summons to me from Warwick and the conspirators to appear before them to-morrow.”

“And do they suppose your grace will comply?” asked the duchess, scornfully.

“It would seem so,” replied the duke. “I only regret that I cannot arrest them all, and send them to the Tower.”

“Why not do it?” said the duchess.

“I have not sufficient force, and am uncertain as to the citizens.”

“The citizens are with you.”

“I think so, but am not sure.”

“More of this anon,” said the duchess.

“His majesty looks anxious. Go to him.”

The Protector complied.

“The insolence of these traitors passes endurance,” he said. “Your majesty will scarcely believe me when I tell you they have summoned me to appear before them to-morrow, and answer certain charges to be brought against me.”

“I do not wonder at your indignation, uncle,” said the king.

“His grace feels angry that his devotion to your majesty should be doubted,” said the duchess. “As to any charges these traitors may bring against him, he treats them with contempt.”

“It matters little what others think, if

my confidence in him is unshaken," said the king.

"I am glad to hear your majesty say so," cried the duchess.

"My enemies have now made their designs manifest," said the Protector, "and can be dealt with openly. To-morrow I shall remove to Windsor Castle; and instead of appearing before Warwick and his confederates, I shall summon them to appear before me."

Shortly afterwards, the party separated. Edward rejoined his tutors, and quitted the gallery. The Protector withdrew to his cabinet, taking his secretary, Cecil, with him. The duchess disappeared with Margaret Flowerdew, and only Cranmer and the others were left.

"What are the accusations brought

against the Lord Protector by his enemies?" inquired the archbishop. "I have not heard them."

"I can tell your grace," replied Paget. "First of all, they charge him with fratricide, and say that he has not hesitated to sacrifice his own brother to his boundless ambition."

"That was a lamentable act," said Cranmer; "but it could not be avoided."

"Then they contend that the duke has been the cause of all the risings that have occurred this year by taking the part of the commons, and leading them to believe they have been oppressed; that he has favoured the rebels throughout, and granted them an amnesty against the advice of the Council."

"I fear that is warranted," said Cranmer
"What more?"

“The next charge is that he has maintained a corps of German mercenaries.”

“They were needed,” cried Sir Thomas Smith. “Without their aid, Warwick himself would have been defeated by the rebels at Norwich.”

“Then they say he has built for himself a palace, larger and more magnificent than any belonging to the king, and that to obtain materials for it he has destroyed several churches; that he alone has profited by the sale of the funds destined for the maintenance of the chantries.”

“And have not Warwick and others of the Council benefited by the sale of church property?” remarked Sir Thomas Smith. “The charge comes with an ill grace from them.”

“The next is a serious accusation,” said Petre. “They say he has violated the

settlement made by the late king, and appointed himself Protector, to the exclusion of the other executors, who have as much right to the government as he has."

"There must be a regent," observed Paget, "and no one is so well fitted for the high office as the king's uncle."

"But Warwick and his partisans say he has exacted letters patent from the king to favour his ambitious designs," pursued Petre; "and has abused his authority by rejecting the advice of the Council, and acting according to his own pleasure."

"The duke can easily defend himself against all these charges, and retaliate upon his accusers," said Sir Thomas Smith.

"But I still hope the dispute may be amicably settled," said Cranmer; "and that the duke and his opponents may not

come into personal conflict. That would lead to terrible consequences."

"It might lead to the Protector's overthrow," said Petre.

"More likely to Warwick's destruction," said Smith.

At this moment the Duke of Somerset came forth from the cabinet, with a letter in his hand.

Seeing he desired to speak with them, the others advanced to meet him.

"Before the breach with the Council is irremediable," said the Duke, "I have written a final letter to them, which I wish to be delivered to-morrow."

"I will deliver it, if your grace thinks proper," said Petre; "and I can then answer any questions put to me."

"You will render me a service," said the

Duke, giving him the letter. “But understand that nothing save entire submission on their part, and withdrawal of all charges, will content me.”

“I almost despair of bringing them to reason,” said Petre. “But I will do my best.”

“I hoped your grace might adopt a conciliatory tone,” said Cranmer. “Since you demand submission, I fear the quarrel will not terminate.”

“That letter contains my ultimatum,” said the duke.

And, with a haughty bow, he re-entered the cabinet.

“His overthrow is certain,” said Petre, “Warwick will never submit.”

“Not willingly, but he may be forced,” said Sir Thomas Smith.

IV.

A FALSE ALARM.

THAT evening, a female figure might be seen moving quickly along a retired walk in the beautiful gardens of the palace ; and it must be borne in mind that the magnificent fabric reared by Wolsey was then unaltered, and the gardens kept up in their pristine stately fashion. The lady passed on to the end of the walk, waited there for a few minutes, and then retraced her steps.

The shades of evening were fast deepening into night ; but there was still light enough to distinguish the whole of this side of the palace, with its octangular towers, tall, clustered chimneys, embattled parapets, and lofty mullioned windows.

That Margaret Flowerdew—for she it was who gazed at that stately pile—heeded its architectural beauties, we do not mean to assert, for she was thinking of one who ought to have been there at the time—but she was enchanted by its general effect. However, she was just about to depart, when her truant lover made his appearance.

“I am late,” said Augustin, as he came up, and pressed her hand to his lips ; “but I have only just returned from Windsor.”

“I did not know you had been there,” she said.

“I have been to fetch a troop of horse for the Lord Protector,” he replied. “Are you aware that we shall quit this palace to-morrow?”

“Yes; and I am very sorry for it.”

“You will like Windsor Castle much better, or I am greatly mistaken. But Hampton Court has its charms.”

“To me it appears perfection,” said Margaret. “I have been happier here than I ever was elsewhere.”

“Happier than at Hethersett?”

“Ay, happier even than there. The duchess has shown me the greatest kindness, and I have been so much interested in the young king.”

“But for the Earl of Warwick you might have remained here,” said Augustin. “Your happiness has been disturbed by his ambitious designs.”

“What does he seek?” asked Margaret.

“To displace the Lord Protector, and become regent in his stead. The aspiring earl will not be content till he has got the young king into his hands; and he cares not as to the means by which his object can be achieved. 'Tis possible an attempt may be made to carry off his majesty to-night.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed Margaret; “you alarm me greatly. But I hope there is no chance of such an occurrence. The duchess has said nothing to me on the subject.”

“Doubtless the duke has not told her of his fears. But there *is* danger.”

While they were conversing, the gloom had increased, and Margaret looked round uneasily.

“You have frightened me so much,” she said, in a low tone, “that I fancy I discern some armed men yonder.”

Augustin looked in the direction indicated, and perceived a party of arquebusiers. They had just emerged from an alley, and were moving cautiously towards the palace.

“You are right,” he said. “Those are Warwick’s soldiers. The alarm must be given instantly.”

“Heaven grant we may not be too late!” exclaimed Margaret. “Another party, I fear, has already entered the palace.”

“Not a moment must be lost,” said Augustin. “Fly to the duchess. Tell her what we have seen, and what we apprehend. She will know how to act. I

will follow those men, and give the alarm if needful."

Margaret hurried off, and entered the palace by an open window from which she had come forth.

In another minute, she had ascended a staircase, and was in the duchess's apartments.

At first, her grace was incredulous, deeming it impossible such a daring attempt could be made before the inmates of the palace had retired to rest.

"But I will at once ascertain that his majesty is safe," she said. "Come with me."

Scarcely had they entered the corridor, than they met the duke himself with a great number of attendants, several of whom bore lights.

The Protector was in a state of great excitement and alarm.

“Have you seen the king?” he cried.

“Is he not in his own chamber?” asked the duchess.

“No; he has disappeared,” replied the duke.

“Then Warwick’s plan has succeeded,” cried the duchess. “His majesty has been carried off.”

“He cannot have quitted the palace,” said the duke. “He was in his own rooms not many minutes ago. He must be concealed somewhere.”

“But there are armed men in the garden, your grace,” said Margaret. “I have seen them myself.”

“In the garden?” exclaimed the duke.
“I will go there at once!”

And he dashed down the staircase, followed by his attendants.

“His grace will expose himself to great risk,” said the duchess. “He himself may be captured. He ought to have a strong guard with him.”

“Shall I order it?” said Margaret.

“No; they will not obey you,” rejoined the duchess. “I will go myself. Remain here till my return.”

Margaret had not been alone many moments, when the door of an adjoining chamber was cautiously opened, and, to her infinite surprise, the king came forth.

“Oh, how delighted I am to behold your majesty!” she exclaimed, springing towards him. “We feared you had been carried off.”

“No harm whatever has happened to me,” he replied. “I have been in that

chamber. To tell you the truth, fair damsel, I have been diverting myself at the Lord Protector's expense. Knowing he is uneasy about me, I could not help frightening him a little."

"And your majesty has perfectly succeeded!" she replied. "Both his grace and the duchess are terribly alarmed."

"I hope I have not carried the jest too far," said Edward.

"They will readily pardon it when they find your majesty here," said Margaret; "though, no doubt, they will be greatly surprised."

"They did not deem me capable of such folly," said Edward, laughing heartily.

"They may deem it somewhat inconsistent with your majesty's grave character," she remarked.

"And you are of the same opinion, it

seems," he rejoined, still laughing. "I wished to see what would be done in case of my disappearance, and therefore concealed myself in yonder chamber."

"If I may venture to say so, I think it will be best for your majesty to stop here," observed Margaret.

"Nay, I have not quite done," said Edward. "Say nothing to the duchess on her return."

"Oh, my liege, let me relieve her anxiety, I pray you!" entreated Margaret.

"Not a word, I command you," said the king. "I am now going back to my place of concealment. I will discover myself at the right moment."

With this, he returned to the chamber, but left the door slightly ajar, so that he could hear and see all that passed.

Almost immediately afterwards, the duchess appeared.

“I have sent off the guard,” she said. “But it is strange that nothing has occurred to cause the slightest alarm. All the servants think it impossible the king can have been carried off. What *can* have happened to him? It is not likely he would conceal himself.”

“Not likely, but possible,” said Margaret.

“True; further search must be made.”

“I would recommend your grace to begin with that chamber,” observed Margaret, significantly.

“He is there?” whispered the duchess.

Margaret made no reply; but the duchess saw she had guessed correctly, and her uneasiness vanished.

“After all, I believe we shall have a

satisfactory explanation of the mystery," she said. "But I will await the duke's return before taking any further steps."

Soon afterwards the Protector made his appearance, attended by Augustin.

"Have you seen aught of his majesty?" inquired the duchess.

"Nothing," replied the duke. "Nor do I believe he has ever quitted this part of the palace. The soldiers in the garden were my own men, placed there for the king's protection."

"As I at once discovered when I got near them," said Augustin. "I now feel I acted too precipitately."

"But you acted for the best," said the Protector; "and his majesty when he hears of your conduct, will thank you for your zeal."

"He does," said Edward, coming forth

from the chamber in which he had been concealed, followed by a couple of pages. “I thank you heartily for your devotion, and I also thank Mistress Margaret Flower-dew. Had there been any attempt intended, she would have saved me from capture. But the danger was imaginary ; and I have to entreat your grace’s pardon—yours also, madam—for the needless alarm I have given you. Had I reflected, my foolish scheme would never have been executed. Fortunately, it has led to no unpleasant consequences.”

“That I have felt great anxiety, I will not attempt to deny,” replied the Protector ; “but the satisfaction of finding your majesty safe and sound more than compensates me.”

“Have I your grace’s forgiveness ?” said the king, turning to the duchess.

“I ought to chide your majesty,” but I will not,” she answered with a smile.

“ You need fear no repetition of the boyish folly,” he said. “ I am ashamed of it. And no further watch need be kept in the garden. Should any attempt be made to carry me off, I shall not fail to give the alarm myself. Good night to all; your grace, good night.”

Kissing the duchess’s hand, and bowing graciously to the Protector and the others, he retired to his own apartments.

V.

OF THE KING'S DEPARTURE FOR WINDSOR CASTLE.

UNUSUAL bustle reigned within the palace next day, all its most important inmates being about to depart for Windsor Castle.

An early morning service was performed in the chapel in the Fountain Court, which was attended by the king and the Lord Protector, and a sermon preached by Cranmer.

This beautiful chapel must have had a

special interest for Edward, since it was built in the time of his mother, as was shown by the arms of Henry the Eighth, impaling those of Seymour, placed over the door, and by the initials H. I. united in a true lovers' knot.

A sumptuous banquet was afterwards held in the great hall, at which a vast number of persons were present. On the *haut pas* of the table sat the young monarch, in a gown of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and bordered with ermine. He had the Duchess of Somerset on his right, and the Archbishop of Canterbury on the left, and was served by the Lord Protector. All the principal personages of the Court were present, including Sir William Paget, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir John Thynne, and Cecil.

At the lower tables sat Master Fisher, Master Gray of Reading, and a great number of the duke's armed retainers, who had instantly responded to the letters he had sent them.

There were also several officers of the royal guard in their accoutrements, and three hundred lansquenets, who had come from Windsor that morning to escort the king.

To the Earl of Shrewsbury and several of the nobles, on whom he thought he could rely, the Protector had written in these terms: "We most earnestly pray and require you to come hither to the king at once, as ye tender his good and preservation, and our hearty acquainted friendship." But urgent as was the summons, none of them had answered it.

To the lord mayor and the civic authorities he had sent a special messenger, enjoining an immediate levy of a thousand men for the king's protection. But no answer had been sent.

Furthermore, in the letter addressed by him to the Earl of Warwick and his adherents, he said, "That he was very sorry to see them resolved to bring matters to extremities by violence; but if they persisted in that course, he should defend himself to the last against them, and leave the issue to Heaven."

Whether Sir William Petre had deserted him, or had been detained, he could not tell, but no answer had been brought back.

Thus matters stood at the present moment. But though irritated, the Protector had not

lost heart, feeling certain he should be able within the next few days to raise a force sufficiently large to put down his enemies.

Determined to make his departure to Windsor imposing and regal in character, he had planned that he should be attended by at least five hundred well-mounted and well-armed horsemen, and by a certain number of foot-soldiers.

This large escort, which he felt sure would impress his enemies, was to be composed of two hundred of the king's guard, and three hundred lansquenets. Besides this force he had a hundred of his own retainers, and meant to take them with him, together with a large company of foot.

Half an hour prior to the departure of the grand cavalcade, which did not take

place till towards evening—the whole of the morning being occupied in preparation—the Duchess of Somerset and her ladies, with a large attendance of pages, proceeded to the Water Gallery, a building near the river, where they embarked on the magnificent barge destined to convey them to Windsor.

They had minstrels with them to beguile the tedium of the voyage—in case any should be felt—and a guard of arquebusiers for their protection, commanded by Augustin Stewart. In the same vessel, which bore the royal standard at its prow, were the Archbishop of Canterbury and his chaplains, with other persons of importance.

Behind came another barge, not quite so splendid as the foremost, containing the whole of the royal household.

As the evening was charming, the short voyage about to be taken through one of the loveliest districts of England could not fail to be delightful; and Augustin Stewart, who had the advantage of Margaret's society, only wished it could have been much longer.

Shortly after the barges had started on their pleasant voyage, trumpets were loudly blown, and from the archway of the great turreted gate issued the advanced guard, consisting of a hundred men, all well mounted and splendidly accoutred. With them were sergeants of the guard, henchmen, and trumpeters, in emblazoned scarlet tunics.

Next came the young king, riding a palfrey, housed with crimson velvet, embroidered with gold. He himself wore a

gown of cloth of gold, and had a cap adorned with jewels on his head.

Beside him, on a charger that completely dwarfed his own palfrey, rode the Lord Protector, superbly apparelled, and looking by far the most important personage in the cavalcade. Many who beheld the Duke of Somerset on that day thought he affected a royal manner.

Edward and his haughty uncle were attended by henchmen and pages of honour on horseback.

After them came another troop of horse, accoutred and equipped in all respects like the advanced guard. Then came a number of gentlemen in richly embroidered gowns of various hues. Next followed the lansquenets, and the rear of the cavalcade was brought up by two hundred foot-soldiers.

A splendid litter was waiting at the landing-place at Datchet Bridge to take the Duchess of Somerset to the castle, and Margaret went with her. Cranmer and his chaplains were conveyed in another litter.

Within the last half-hour a great change had taken place in the weather, which had been exceedingly fine throughout the day. The sun was setting ominously, and a heavy black cloud hung over the Round Tower, that made those who were going to the castle anxious to reach their destination.

Though this was not the best aspect under which the majestic pile could be viewed, the effect was very striking; and Margaret, who beheld the grand palatial fortress for the first time, was greatly impressed by its appearance.

The duchess and the archbishop reached the castle, and had descended from their litters in the Upper Ward before the storm came on, but the king and the Protector were not so fortunate, though they were close behind.

The cold reception given by the inhabitants of Windsor to Edward and his uncle convinced the latter that his popularity was gone. No enthusiasm whatever was displayed. No crowds had assembled to greet them as they entered the town. Not a single house was decorated. The proud Protector was deeply mortified, and his breast burned with anger. Even the king was offended by the sullen looks of the people.

“The loyal inhabitants of Windsor do not seem particularly glad to see us,” he re-

marked. “What has happened to cause the change?”

“It is the work of the Council, my liege,” replied the Protector, in a sombre tone.

But he soon found that the ill-humour of the inhabitants was caused by their dislike to the German mercenaries, as was shown by their audible expressions of aversion when the lansquenets came up.

“These foreign troops are only kept to be used against the people,” cried several voices. “Twere well his majesty should dismiss them.”

“You hear that, uncle?” said the king.

“Ay, my liege,” replied the Protector.
“But I heed it not.”

Edward made no remark at the time, but the duke perceived he was not satisfied—

more especially when other cries to the like effect were heard.

But the cavalcade went on.

Already the advanced guard had passed through the great gate built by Henry the Eighth, and leading to the Lower Ward, when just as Edward and the Protector entered the archway, a loud clap of thunder was heard, and a bolt struck a vane on Saint George's Chapel, doing some little damage to the fabric.

The incident caused general consternation, and was looked upon as an ill omen. But little time was allowed for consideration. A violent thunderstorm came on at the same moment, accompanied by a deluge of rain that compelled all the principal personages to dismount, and seek instant shelter. But even the king was thoroughly drenched, and the violent cold which his

majesty caught on the occasion was attributed to the Protector, who, it was said, had intentionally exposed him to the storm.

VI.

HOW THE KING WAS SEIZED WITH SUDDEN ILLNESS IN
SAINT GEORGE'S CHAPEL.

NEXT day the Protector was occupied in preparing for the defence of the castle in case it should be attacked; but was much discouraged, because he fancied his own men were unwilling to stand by him, and he was still without an answer from any of the nobles to whom he had applied for assistance.

Lord Russell and Sir William Herbert

had written from Andover, but declined to send him the forces he required, making it clear that they intended to join the revolted members of the Council.

But he was chiefly disheartened by the evident reluctance of the lord mayor and the civic authorities to aid him in this emergency. He had written in the king's name, enjoining them to send a thousand well-armed men for his majesty's protection ; but not one had come.

It seemed as if the citizens, on whom he counted, had deserted him, and gone over to the enemy. To add to his anxieties and difficulties, the king ordered the dismissal of the lansquenets, and was supported in the measure by Paget, Cranmer, and Smith.

“ But consider the consequences, my liege,” remonstrated the Protector. “ If I

discharge them, they will go over at once to Warwick and his adherents, who will employ them against us. I must, therefore, retain them for the present."

"Have no such fear," said Paget. "Warwick will not dare to employ them, since he has made it one of the articles of accusation against your grace that you have employed mercenaries."

"These lansquenets were engaged for the war with Scotland, and were sent against the Norfolk rebels at Warwick's own urgent request. Without their aid, he would have been defeated by Ket."

"Unquestionably they are excellent soldiers," said the king; "but I like not to use them against my own subjects, unless those subjects are rebellious."

"I repeat it would be dangerous to dismiss them just now, my liege," said the

Protector. “ But as soon as we have an adequate force, they shall go.”

“ They will do more harm than good,” observed Paget, “ and will alienate many loyal subjects from his majesty.”

Cranmer and Sir Thomas Smith were preparing to urge further remonstrance, but the Protector checked them by saying sternly and positively that he should not alter his determination.

“ I know what is best to be done,” he remarked.

“ Then your grace is prepared to take the consequences?” observed Paget.

“ Certainly,” replied the Protector. “ I am acting for the best, and if unsuccessful I shall not have to reproach myself. Will it please your majesty to go round the castle with me?”

“ No, my good uncle,” replied the king.

“ I will leave its defence to you. You would not be likely to adopt any of my suggestions.”

The Protector felt the reproof.

“ My liege,” he said, “ this is a more momentous juncture than it seems. It is simply a struggle for power on the part of Warwick and his confederates, which, if it succeeds, must end in my overthrow. Of that I am perfectly aware. But I do not believe it *will* succeed, because I have right and justice on my side. Most serious interests would be affected by Warwick’s accession to power. The Reformation itself would be endangered,” he added, glancing at Cranmer, “ and all that has lately been accomplished for the benefit of the Protestant religion might be undone.”

“ I recognise the truth of what your grace says,” observed Cranmer ; “ and trust,

therefore, that you may long maintain the exalted position which you fill so worthily."

"And of which traitors only can deprive you," said Sir Thomas Smith, glancing at Paget.

"If I believed myself guilty of the crimes laid to my charge by these false traitors," said the Protector, "I would instantly surrender myself to justice. But knowing myself innocent, I shall defy them, and punish them as severely as I can for their false and malicious accusations. Did I think he would answer the challenge, I would defy Warwick to mortal combat."

"I forbid it!" said the king, authoritatively. "I still hope that the quarrel may be amicably arranged."

"And my earnest prayers to Heaven shall

continue to be offered for the like result," said Cranmer "I am now going to Saint George's Chapel."

"We will follow your grace there," rejoined the king.

As Edward, with the Protector, Paget, and Smith, preceded by two officers of arms, and followed by half a dozen yeomen of the guard, passed through the gate communicating between the courts, they found the Lower Ward completely filled with armed men -- conspicuous among them being the lansquenets, who more than trebled the others in number. Edward could not but admit that they were a very fine body of men, and perfectly equipped, and was pleased by the enthusiasm with which they greeted him.

Further on, the soldiers of the royal guard were drawn up, in double line

to the south entrance of Saint George's Chapel.

Passing through their ranks, the king and the Protector were met by other officers in embroidered velvet mantles, and ceremoniously conducted to the choir, on either side of which, near the altar, were ranged the Poor Knights.

Erected by Edward the Third, greatly enriched by Edward the Fourth, and by the king's sire and grandsire—the former of whom completed the vaulting of the roof, and added much admirable carved work—the choir was then in perfection, as, indeed, was the entire chapel, with its storied windows, richly dight, filled with deep-stained glass, set in the most exquisite and varied tracery, its architectural beauty and ornaments—the ceiling being decorated with heraldic insignia, and the centre

arch of the nave emblazoned with the arms of Henry the Eighth, Charles the Fifth, Francis the First, and Ferdinand Infant of Spain, and afterwards Emperor of Germany. With all these attractions, combined with its historical associations, it may be truly said that Saint George's Chapel had not its equal in the kingdom.

To return to the choir. The stalls, then only twenty-six in number, were magnificent. Above their elaborately-carved canopies, the swords of the knights companions were placed, and their banners displayed.

In a small closet adjoining the stalls, though hidden by the embroidered velvet curtains drawn around it, sat the Duchess of Somerset and Margaret Flowerdew.

The altar at which knelt Cranmer and his chaplains was adorned with hangings of

gold, and glittered with consecrated vessels, though a change to greater simplicity was at hand.

Making a reverence to the altar, Edward entered his stall, which was the foremost on the left, where he repeated the reverence, the officers who had attended him stationing themselves on the steps.

The king's example was imitated by the Protector ; and by all the important personages who followed ; and when the stalls were filled by wearers of the richest mantles and gowns, the choir presented a splendid sight.

The service began, and, as may be supposed, was admirably performed, but it was destined to an unpleasant interruption.

Throughout the morning the king, who had evidently taken cold, felt feverish and unwell, though he made no complaint, and

did not deem it necessary to consult his physician, Doctor Radclyffe ; but ever since he had entered Saint George's Chapel, the fever that had seized him became much worse, and entirely prevented him from attending to his devotions.

Alarmed by the sensations he experienced, and fearing he should faint, he said to one of the officers near him, “Tell the Lord Protector to come to me.”

As the duke was in the next stall, the officer had only to turn partly round to deliver the order, which was instantly obeyed.

The Protector saw at once that the king was exceedingly unwell, and could not doubt the cause of his illness, while he greatly regretted that his majesty should have left his own apartments. However, there was nothing to be done but to remove him as

quickly as possible, and this task he himself undertook.

The king being unable to support himself, he took him in his arms, and bore him from the chapel. As he could not do this unobserved, the circumstance caused the greatest sensation. The service was instantly interrupted, and every one arose to inquire what had happened to the king.

But Edward himself, who had in some degree recovered, calmed their fears by declaring it was nothing more than faintness, to which he was occasionally liable.

In proof that he was better, he refused to enter the deanery, which was close at hand, or wait for a litter, and walked to the Upper Ward, attended by the Protector.

VII.

HOW THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET AND MARGARET ATTENDED
UPON THE KING.

As he entered his own apartment, the king was met by his physician, Doctor Ratclyffe, who at once pronounced that his majesty was suffering from slight fever, arising from cold ; but added that it would soon pass off.

While the doctor was preparing a cooling draught of oxymel for his royal patient, the Duchess of Somerset appeared, accompanied by Margaret Flowerdew ; and on

seeing them, Edward expressed an earnest desire, if his illness should continue, or become more serious, that they would attend upon him.

Both were highly gratified by the request, and promised compliance ; but Doctor Ratcliffé again assured the king there was not the slightest cause for uneasiness.

“ This draught and a few hours’ repose will perfectly restore your majesty,” he said.

He then withdrew with the king to an inner apartment, accompanied by the Protector, who had been present at the consultation, and was not quite so sanguine as the doctor.

After what the king had said to them, the duchess and Margaret remained, in case their attendance should be required.

Shortly afterwards, the duke came forth,

and said that the king was lying down on a couch, but did not seem disposed to sleep.

“I do not think the fever will abate so quickly as Doctor Ratclyffe anticipates,” he said. “But we shall see. Meantime, I must try to calm the excitement that no doubt prevails throughout the castle.”

With this design, he quitted the apartment.

Both the duchess and Margaret now began to feel anxious about the king, but they did not say much, as their remarks might be overheard by the attendants. Some quarter of an hour elapsed, when Doctor Ratclyffe reappeared, and advancing towards the duchess, said :

“I am come to summon your grace, and you, too, fair mistress. His majesty has been asking for you both. It is most important he should obtain some slumber, and

I do not think he will unless you are with him."

Upon this, they both arose, and accompanied the doctor to the inner apartment.

A large room, the walls of which were covered with magnificent tapestry of gold, silver, and velvet, and adorned with portraits of the late king, and his queen, Jane Seymour. The heavy furniture gave it a somewhat sombre air.

On a couch reclined Edward, and near it was a fauteuil, which the doctor signed to the duchess to take, while he placed a tabouret at a little distance for Margaret.

He then quitted the apartment, without a word.

It was evident that Edward was not asleep, though he said nothing.

When the doctor was gone, he remarked to the duchess :

“ I am glad you are come ; I shall sleep now.”

“ Tranquillise yourself, I pray your majesty,” she rejoined. “ We will not leave you.”

For some minutes the king remained perfectly quiet. He then slightly raised himself, and said to Margaret :

“ Do you sing, fair mistress ?”

“ I will make the attempt, if your majesty desires it,” she replied.

“ Pray do,” he said.

In a low, sweet voice, that might have lulled a child to slumber, Margaret then sang a simple ditty, which, fortunately, recurred to her. Its effect was all that could be desired. The king’s breathing soon told that he slept.

Fearing he might awake if she suddenly

ceased, she went on for a little time longer. After this she and the duchess conversed in the lowest whispers, but did not dare to quit their seats.

Two or three hours had passed by, and the king still continued to slumber, while the watchers remained at their posts.

At the expiration of that time, the tapestry that covered the entrance to the room was gently raised, and the Protector looked in. He seemed well satisfied with what he beheld, but signed to the duchess to come to him. Thereupon, she noiselessly arose, and quitted the room.

Shortly afterwards, Edward awoke, and Margaret felt a good deal embarrassed, but was relieved by the king's cheerful looks.

“Where is the duchess?” he inquired.

“She has only just left the room,” replied Margaret. “Shall I bring her to your majesty?”

“No; I can dispense with her attendance,” he replied. “I feel much better. My fever is quite gone.”

“I rejoice to hear it, my liege!” she cried, earnestly.

“I owe my cure entirely to you,” he said. “Had you not sung to me, I should not have slept; and, without sleep, I should not have got rid of the fever.”

“Suffer me to communicate the good news of your majesty’s recovery to the duchess and Doctor Ratclyffe.”

“No; you must remain with me, or I may have a relapse.”

“Shall I again sing to your majesty?”

“No; I am quite well now, and would

rather converse with you. I want to ask you some questions. They are not difficult. First, I desire to know whether you have any interest in Augustin Stewart?"

"Does your majesty desire me to answer that question?"

"Certainly, or I should not ask it."

"Then I must reply that I have a great interest in him."

"In a word, you love him?"

"My liege, I have long loved him. But I have regarded our union as impossible."

"Wherefore?"

"I cannot very well explain, my liege."

"Nor do I desire an explanation, unless you are disposed to offer it," said the king. "But understand that you may depend upon my assistance."

“ I thank your majesty from my heart !” said Margaret.

Just then the tapestry was again raised, and Doctor Ratclyffe and the Protector looked in.

Seeing the king sitting up on the couch, and engaged in an animated conversation with Margaret, the doctor stepped quickly forward and said :

“ I am rejoiced to find your majesty is better.”

“ I am quite well,” replied Edward, springing to his feet. “ You were perfectly right in your opinion. I only required a little sleep, and this damsel has procured it me.”

“ We are all infinitely beholden to her,” said the Protector, glancing at Margaret.

“ We shall know how to cure your majesty of a cold in future,” said the duchess.

“ We must have Margaret Flowerdew’s aid.”

“ Yes; I could have done nothing without her,” said the doctor.

“ Heaven be praised your majesty is better !” exclaimed the Protector. “ The joyful tidings shall instantly be made known to all within the castle !”

“ I would not appear ungrateful for the attention shown me, your grace,” said Edward. “ But, after all, there has not been much the matter with me.”

“ Come forth then, my liege, I entreat you,” said the Protector, “ and show yourself to your subjects !”

“ It may be well that your majesty should do so,” remarked Doctor Ratclyffe, significantly.

VIII.

HOW WARWICK'S PLOT SEEMED LIKELY TO PROVE
SUCCESSFUL.

NEXT morning, Augustin Stewart returned from the City, whither he had been despatched by the Protector with another letter to the lord mayor, commanding him to send without delay a thousand men for the defence of the king's person.

To this the lord mayor answered that he had just received a similar letter from the Lords of the Council, ordering him to furnish two thousand men, likewise for his

majesty's defence, and as he could not send both, he should wait till the question was settled.

“I can grant no aid without the assent of the Common Council of the City,” wrote Sir Henry Amcotes, then lord mayor. “We shall be ready, upon any necessity, to apply all our forces for the king's defence and honour; but we entreat his majesty to be pleased to hear such complaints as are objected against the Lord Protector by the Lords of the Council before he assembles forces in the field which cannot be done without great danger.”

“Ha! this is what they say!” exclaimed the duke, pacing to and fro within his cabinet, after he had read the letter.
“Nothing will be done?”

“Nothing,” replied Augustin, who was alone with him. “But I have much to tell

your grace, which it is highly important you should hear, albeit disagreeable."

"Speak freely," said the duke. "I desire to learn the truth."

"'Tis thus, then. Within the last two days the conspiracy against your grace has made rapid progress. They have succeeded in possessing themselves of the Tower."

"The Tower!" exclaimed the Protector, fiercely. "They can only have obtained it by treachery. I thought Sir John Markham, the Lieutenant, was true to me."

"Sir John Markham is removed, and Sir Leonard Chamberlain put in his place," replied Augustin. "But possession of the Tower was obtained through the instrumentality of the Lord Treasurer, Sir William Paulet, and Sir John Gage, the Constable."

“What! has Sir John Gage likewise deserted me?” cried the Protector. “'Tis a heavy blow, in truth. Masters of the Tower, the conspirators are masters of the City.”

“Doubtless that was felt by the citizens, your grace,” replied Augustin. “The Earl of Warwick has left Ely-place, and is now with the Master of the Mint at Suffolk-place, in Southwark. The Lord Saint John, President of the Council, the Marquis of Northampton, the Earls of Arundel, Shrewsbury, and Southampton, with others, are lodging in the Tower. They have published a proclamation, in which they say they assembled together in London for no other purpose but to remove the king from your care.”

“They avow their design, then!” cried

the duke. “ What more do they say? Speak freely.”

“ They say your grace has slandered the Council, and striven to cause variance between the king and his nobles.”

“ ‘Tis false !” exclaimed the duke. “ The Council have slandered me. Do they say more ?”

“ They describe your grace as a great traitor, and call upon the City and commons to help them to take you from the king.”

The Protector made no reply, but, apparently quite overwhelmed, sank into a chair, and remained for some time with his face buried in his hands.

At last he raised his head, and, as if unconscious he was not alone, ejaculated :

“ What am I to do in this perilous extremity ?”

On hearing this exclamation, Augustin

came forward, and threw himself at his feet, and said :

“As I firmly believe resistance is impossible, I would humbly counsel your grace to make peace with your enemies.”

“But they will not be content, except with my life,” said the duke. “If I thought so, I would resign the Protectorship.”

“Your grace’s resignation, I am certain, would content the Earl of Warwick, who is your chief enemy, and convert him into a friend,” urged Augustin.

“It might do so,” said the duke. “I will weigh the matter.”

“But your grace must decide quickly, for I have heard that Sir Philip Hoby will be sent by the lords with a letter to the king.”

Before the duke could make any answer,

the tapestry was raised, and the duchess entered with Margaret.

On beholding them, Augustin immediately arose.

“ You have brought his grace bad news, I fear, sir ? ” said the duchess.

The Protector did not allow him to answer the question, but starting to his feet, seized her hand ; and with a look, such as she had never before seen in his grave countenance, exclaimed :

“ All is lost—my enemies triumph ! They are masters of the Tower, and have the City with them ! I must yield ! ”

“ Yield ? Never ! ” exclaimed the duchess, scornfully. “ I am surprised to hear your grace talk thus. You are within Windsor Castle. You have the king in your power. You are surrounded by your own guard, and aided by foreign mercenaries on whom

you can depend, and yet talk of yielding!"

"I could not hold out if I were besieged," said the duke. "I have no provisions. But it will not come to that. I shall relinquish my office and dignity."

"And you will do this at the mere threatening of danger?" cried the duchess.

"The danger is immediate," rejoined the duke. "Warwick and the Lords of the Council will demand that the king shall be delivered up to them, and I dare not refuse."

"Dare not!" cried the duchess. "You are strangely altered. But I warn you not to be deluded by any false promises made by these traitors. If they once get you into their hands, they will put you to death. Make no terms with Warwick, but resist him to the last. Such is my counsel."

The duke seemed greatly troubled, and made no reply.

At this juncture, Augustin ventured to interpose.

“ My attachment to the Lord Protector forces me to speak, madam,” he said. “ From what I have seen and heard, I am convinced there is no chance of safety for his grace save in submission.”

“ You are a traitor, like the rest !” cried the duchess, angrily.

“ He is no traitor,” said the duke. “ He has spoken the truth to me, like a faithful servant, and I thank him for the courage he has displayed. I shall follow his counsel.”

“ And disregard mine ?” cried the duchess.

“ Yours would inevitably lead me to the scaffold !” rejoined the duke.

Whatever answer the duchess meditated was cut short by the entrance of an officer.

“His majesty desires your grace’s presence in the council-chamber,” said the officer, bowing.

“I will attend him,” replied the Protector.
“Are any persons with his majesty?”

“His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Comptroller, and Sir Thomas Smith. It may import your grace to know that Sir Philip Hoby has just brought a despatch from the Council.”

“Your information proves correct, I find, sir,” said the duke to Augustin.

“I never doubted it, your grace,” replied the latter.

“Bear yourself firmly, my lord,” said the duchess, clasping the duke’s arm as

he was about to depart. “Come back as you go.”

“I shall not come back as Protector,” he replied.

And he quitted the room with the officer.

IX.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET RESIGNED HIS HIGH OFFICE;
AND HOW HE WAS ARRESTED BY SIR ANTHONY WING-
FIELD.

ON entering the council-chamber, the Protector saw at once, from the king's altered manner towards him, that his enemies had prevailed.

Under a splendid canopy, on the back of which were embroidered the royal arms, with his foot upon a velvet stool, sat Edward, looking very grave.

Cranmer was on his majesty's right, and

on the left was a vacant seat, usually occupied by the Protector himself, but the king did not motion him to take it, neither would he allow him to kiss his hand when he knelt before him.

This manifestation of the royal displeasure greatly pained the duke, but he endeavoured to conceal his anxiety.

Opposite the king was a long table, at which were seated Sir William Paget, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir John Thynne, Sir Michael Stanhope, Cecil, and some others. Every face looked grave.

At the upper end of this table sat Sir Philip Hoby, whom the duke had remarked on his entrance into the council-chamber, and to whom he rightly attributed the king's changed manner.

“ My gracious sovereign,” said the Protector, “ I am informed that a letter from

the Earl of Warwick and other Lords of the Council, notoriously ill-disposed towards me, has just been brought to your majesty by Sir Philip Hoby, whom I have hitherto regarded as a friend, but who has now charged himself with a mission that deprives him of any claim to the title.

“ My liege, I will endeavour to speak calmly, but it is difficult to do so when I perceive the effect produced upon your majesty by that mischievous letter, the purport of which I can readily conjecture, since I have been made acquainted with the false charges published against me by the Earl of Warwick and his adherents in their proclamation to the citizens. In those proclamations I am styled a great traitor, and the City and commons are commanded to help them to take me from your majesty, to whom I have ever been de-

voted. In support of this demand, charges the most conflicting are brought against me. I am called arrogant and aspiring, covetous and profuse, obstinate and vindictive. I am accused of sowing sedition among the nobles and commons, and of supporting the latter—of encouraging rebellions, when I have sought to repress them; above all, I am taxed with being guilty of the basest ingratitude to your majesty.

“All these charges I deny, and can disprove. But I do not desire to prolong a struggle which, were it continued, must prove highly disadvantageous to your majesty and disastrous to the realm. To prove I am neither ambitious nor insatiate, as represented by my enemies, I now, unsolicited, resign my great office and dignity into your majesty’s hands, and pray you

to bestow them on any one you may deem more worthy."

All wondered how the king would act, and were surprised when he answered, coldly :

“We accept your grace’s resignation.”

Protector no longer, Somerset drew back. But there was no sign of pity on Edward’s countenance.

After a moment’s pause, Sir Philip Hoby came forward, and thus addressed the king:

“My liege, I confess I was wholly unprepared for this step on the part of his grace of Somerset. But I hold it an admission of his guilt, since I am certain he would never have renounced his high office had he been able to hold it.”

“That is a most ungenerous and unwarrantable construction to put on his grace’s

noble act!" said Sir Thomas Smith, rising, and speaking with great indignation. " You judge the duke by yourself, Sir Philip!"

" I expect neither generosity nor justice from my enemies," said Somerset, coldly.

Hoby took no notice of Sir Thomas Smith's indignant remark; but said to the duke:

" Will your grace prove your sincerity by dismissing the lansquenets you have brought here?"

" I counsel your grace not to comply with the insidious request," said Sir Thomas Smith.

" I thank you, good Sir Thomas, for your friendly counsel," said the duke. " But I am resolved to put an end to the quarrel."

" Do you authorise me to dismiss them?" asked Hoby.

“ Show my signet-ring to the commander,” said Somerset, giving it to him, “ and bid him take his men forthwith to London — unless your majesty desires to keep them here,” he added to the king.

“ No ; let them go,” said Edward.

“ I have hired them, and am answerable for their pay,” said the duke.

“ That is clearly understood, your grace,” rejoined Hoby, with a singular smile.

And he quitted the council-chamber.

Scarcely was he gone, when an officer entered to say that Sir Anthony Wingfield, vice-chamberlain, had just arrived at the castle, and besought an audience of his majesty.”

“ Admit him,” said the king.

At this unlooked-for announcement a foreboding of fresh danger seized the duke, while Sir Thomas Smith and those attached

to him, who were not in the secret, shared the feeling.

Nor were they deceived. In another minute Sir Anthony Wingfield entered, attended by an officer of the guard and half a dozen armed men, who stationed themselves at the door, so as to prevent any attempt at flight.

Stepping towards the king, who was evidently prepared for what was about to take place, Sir Anthony made a profound obeisance, and said :

“ Have I your majesty’s permission to act ?”

Edward signified his assent.

Thereupon Sir Anthony drew his sword, and turning to Somerset, said :

“ I arrest your grace of high treason ! You are charged with high crimes and

misdemeanours against the king's majesty!"

"I am innocent," replied the duke, firmly. "I have ever been truthful to the king. But here is my sword," he added, delivering it to Sir Anthony, who bowed as he took it.

"I hope your grace will understand that I have now a painful duty to perform," he said.

"I am bound to believe you," rejoined the duke. "My enemies have laid their plans well. I now see why the lansquenets have been removed. But I should not have used them. Am I to be taken to the Tower?"

"For the present, your grace will remain here," replied Sir Anthony. "You will be confined in the Lieutenant's Tower."

“ You have chosen the strongest tower in the castle for my prison,” remarked the duke. “ May I speak to the king?”

Sir Anthony made no objection; but as the duke knelt down before him, Edward, who had maintained an impressive demeanour throughout, averted his head.

“ I pray you, hear me, my liege!” exclaimed Somerset.

But the king remained unmoved; and finding no impression could be made upon him, the duke quitted his suppliant posture.

He then looked towards Cranmer, and bowed, whereupon the archbishop stretched his arms over him, and gave him a benediction, concluding it with the words, “ May Heaven grant your grace a speedy deliverance!”

Then bowing to the rest of the assem-

blage, all of whom had arisen, and were much affected by the scene they had witnessed, Somerset quitted the council-chamber with Sir Anthony.

It soon became apparent that the duty of the officer of the guard, who had accompanied the vice-chamberlain, was not fulfilled. He only quitted the chamber for a few moments, and then returning with a fresh party of men, proceeded to arrest Sir Thomas Smith, Sir John Thynne, Sir Michael Stanhope, and Cecil.

Sir William Paget was not included in the list, and as Sir Thomas Smith passed him, he stopped for a moment, and regarding him sternly, said :

“ Ingrate and traitor, you have helped to destroy the master to whom you owe everything. But you will bitterly repent your treachery !”

They all believed Cranmer equally perfidious, and eyed him scornfully as they went out.

As soon as the prisoners were removed, the king arose. He bowed on his departure both to Cranmer and Paget, but said not a word to either, and seemed to feel some compunction for what he had done.

X.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WAS PLACED IN THE LIEUTENANT'S TOWER IN WINDSOR CASTLE.

MEANTIME the unfortunate Duke of Somerset had been taken by Sir Anthony Wingfield, with as much privacy as possible, to the Lieutenant's Tower—sometimes called the Beauchamp Tower—a very strong fortification, situated on the south side of the castle, at the foot of the Keep, and adjoining the gate of the Middle Ward.

Here the illustrious prisoner was consi-

dered perfectly secure, Sir Anthony Wingfield having become responsible for his safe custody, and the guard appointed to watch him being numerous, and composed of perfectly trusty men.

In a circular chamber in the upper part of this tower, the walls of which were of enormous thickness, and pierced with windows that looked externally like loopholes, but within proved to be deep and wide recesses, sat Somerset.

Alone, and buried in gloomy thought. But there was nothing gloomy in the appearance of the chamber in which he was confined. The stone walls were covered with splendid tapestry, representing the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the furniture was as rich as that in any room in the palace ; while the narrow windows looked out upon the park and forest, then

in their full autumnal beauty on one side, and on the other commanded the whole interior of the castle, with its courts and Keep, its towers and gates, and its beautiful chapel dedicated to Saint George.

Sombre reflections occupied the duke as he sat there, with his head leaning upon his hand, and looking the very image of melancholy and despair.

No one who had beheld him then, crushed and deeply dejected, would have believed that only a few hours ago he had been the proud Lord Protector. His sudden fall had completely overpowered him, and the thought of his recent greatness heightened the mental anguish he endured. He found he had miscalculated his strength, and that he could not bear the change either with fortitude or resignation.

Not till he had fallen did he clearly com-

prehend the height he had attained. He thought of the magnificent palace he had reared, and of the vast sum he had lavished upon it, and with bitter self-reproach, for that palace would now be taken from him. Pride and profusion seemed to have marked his whole career since he had risen to supreme power, and to have excited only hatred and envy.

But the most terrible reflection was his share in the death of Lord Seymour of Sudley. He now felt he was guilty of his brother's blood, and must pay the penalty of the crime. Often had this dread thought occurred to him before, but never with such force as now. So shaken were his nerves, that he scarcely dared raise his head, lest he should behold the admiral standing beside him, and regarding him with a look that announced his doom.

At length the duke was aroused from this gloomy reverie by a great noise in the Lower Ward, caused by the movement of horses and armed men, accompanied by the sound of trumpets and drums ; and going to one of the narrow windows looking upon this court, he perceived that the lansquenets were quitting the castle by the Town Gate.

He himself had dismissed them, and yet, now they were going, he felt he had done wrong. He watched them till the rear-guard had gone forth from the gate, and then, with a heavy sigh, returned to his seat.

Doubtless, in his present melancholy frame of mind, a fresh train of sombre thoughts would have engrossed him, but before he again sank into this state of despondency the door of the chamber was

unfastened by an officer, and the duchess came in.

Having ushered in her grace, the officer immediately withdrew.

In another moment the duke had clasped her to his breast.

“I feared you would not be allowed to visit me,” he said.

“I should have come before,” she replied, “but have been trying to obtain an audience of the king. He has positively refused to see me, and not even Cranmer has been able to move him.”

“I doubt whether Cranmer would really aid you,” said the duke; “I look upon him as an enemy.”

“He professes the greatest friendship for your grace, and seemed to sympathise sincerely with your position,” replied the

duchess, “but I own his conduct is suspicious.”

“He never raised his voice in my defence, nor interceded for me when I stood before the king,” said the duke. “He is as vile a traitor as Paget!”

“I cannot think so, my dear lord,” rejoined the duchess. “But it is certain that the king did not listen to him.”

“He says so, but I cannot credit the assertion,” remarked Somerset. “He has yielded either to the threats or promises of Warwick, and has declared against me. But some one must be found to speak to the king before I am sent to the Tower, or it will be then too late.”

“How can it be accomplished? Evidently Sir Anthony Wingfield’s orders are to allow no one to approach his majesty.”

“There is one person who could approach him, and might be more serviceable than any other—Margaret Flowerdew.”

“Yes; I wonder she did not occur to me,” said the duchess. “She will excite no suspicion, and the king will listen to her. But some scheme must be devised to get her to his presence.”

“Let her wait in the gallery near the royal apartments, and address him when he comes forth,” said the duke. “He will not dismiss her unheard.”

“I am sure he will not,” said the duchess. “He has promised to grant any request she may make. Heaven give her success!”

“Delay not the scheme,” said the duke. “It is our only chance.”

“I will about it forthwith,” said the duchess. “Adieu, my dear lord! Be of

good cheer. I trust soon to bring you good news."

As she tapped against the door, it was instantly opened by the officer, and she went forth.

Again the duke was left alone, but his thoughts were less gloomy than before her grace's visit.

XI.

HOW MARGARET FAILED TO MOVE THE KING.

MARGARET readily agreed to act as the duchess desired, and was not without some hope of success.

“I had conceived a similar plan myself, when I found the king refused to see your grace,” she said; “and circumstances conspire to favour me, for I have just received a message from Doctor Ratchlyffe begging me to come to him at once; and I think I understand why I am wanted.”

“No doubt your surmise is correct,” said the duchess. “Go!”

Thus urged, Margaret hastened to the physician’s room, which adjoined the royal apartments.

On beholding her the physician said :

“I am glad you are come. His majesty is again suffering from over-excitement, brought on by the occurrences of the morning, and can only be cured in the same manner as before. He must be lulled to sleep with a song. You can do this. He has asked for you.”

“I shall be delighted to attend upon him, if you think I can be of any service,” said Margaret.

“I am sure you can,” rejoined the physician. “But the Duchess of Somerset must not accompany you. The king will

not see her. Her presence would irritate him."

"The duchess is not here," said Margaret.

"That is well," rejoined the physician.
"Come with me."

They gained the king's room by a private door, of which Doctor Ratelyffe alone had the right of entrance.

No one was with his majesty at the time, all the attendants being in the ante-chamber. Edward was lying on a couch, and seemed greatly exhausted; but he raised his head as they came in, and smiled as he recognised Margaret.

"So you are come, Margaret," he said.
"The sight of you does me good."

"I am sorry to hear your majesty is unwell," she rejoined, as she knelt before him

and kissed his hand. “ But I trust you will soon be better.”

“ I trust so, too,” he rejoined. “ But I am far from well now, and I believe you are the only person who can do me good. Sit down beside me. I would fain have a little converse with you. I have been much troubled this morning.”

“ I cannot doubt it, my liege,” she replied, “ since you have lost your faithful counsellor, the Duke of Somerset, and have delivered him to his enemies.”

“ The duke was not faithful,” said Edward. “ I loved him, and confided in him ; but he has deceived me—deeply deceived me !”

“ Do not believe so, my liege,” she rejoined, earnestly. “ He has been devoted to your majesty. Give him an opportunity

of answering the accusations of his enemies."

"He has had the opportunity," said the king; "and, if he has not availed himself of it, it is his own fault."

"Judge him not thus harshly, I implore you, my liege!" said Margaret. "Your majesty's uncle, your mother's brother, could not be otherwise than attached to you."

"I loved him once with almost filial regard," said the king. "But the duke yielded to ambition, and aspired to the throne."

"The charge is false, my liege," cried Margaret, energetically; "and cannot be sustained by those who have brought it."

"Proofs of its truth have been laid before me," said Edward.

“ But these supposed proofs can be disproved, my liege,” she rejoined.

Then, prostrating herself before him, and taking his hand, she cried :

“ Oh, my liege ! whatever may have been the Duke of Somerset’s errors, they have been committed inadvertently ; and even if his high crimes and misdemeanours could be established—which they cannot—it is in your majesty’s power to pardon him. Pardon him, therefore, I implore you, my liege ! Do not let him be sacrificed by his enemies, who have combined together to destroy him.”

To this appeal Edward vouchsafed no response, but sank back on the couch.

During the foregoing discourse, Doctor Ratclyffe had remained standing at a little distance, but he now stepped quickly for-

ward, and said to Margaret, “I did not bring you here to irritate his majesty, but to soothe him. Desist, I say, from this annoyance!”

“I have done,” replied Margeret, rising. “I am unequal to any further effort,” she added, in a voice suffocated by emotion.

Doctor Ratclyffe took her hand, and led her out of the room by the private door.

The king moved not.

XII.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET'S FLIGHT WAS PREVENTED.

AGAIN the Duchess of Somerset visited her lord in his prison-chamber. He sprang forward to meet her as she came in, and anxiously inquired :

“Has Margaret seen the king?”

“Seen him, and spoken to him,” rejoined the duchess. “She was taken to his room by Doctor Ratclyffe.”

“But she has not been successful—I can see it in your looks.”

“Alas! no. He is as inflexible as his royal father. He believes you have aimed at the crown, and turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties for pardon.”

“Then my last hope is gone!” cried the duke, despairingly.

“Be not cast down, my dear lord,” she said, taking his hand, and laying her head gently upon his shoulder. “The king may yet relent. From what he said to Margaret, I am sure he still loves you. If he could only be undeceived——”

“But how undeceive him?” interrupted the duke. “Sir Anthony Wingfield told me that any letters I address to the king will be taken to the Council. It would be useless, therefore, to write to his majesty; and it is certain I shall not be allowed an interview with him. My enemies want to

get me to the Tower, where they think they will have me safe."

"Were a chance of escape from this castle offered your grace, would you avail yourself of it?" said the duchess.

"Why do you ask?" cried the duke, looking at her inquiringly.

"Because Augustin Stewart declares he can liberate you, if you are so minded."

"But in what manner does he propose to effect my liberation?" observed the duke. "A strong watch is kept round this tower."

"He did not explain his plan to me," replied the duchess; "and I did not encourage him, for I could not suppose your grace would fly."

"Were I at liberty," said the duke, "I could soon raise an army, and compel my

enemies to surrender the king to me. The lansquenets would join me at once ; and I have since bitterly reproached myself that I was induced by Sir Philip Hoby's taunts to dismiss them. Had I put myself at their head, and marched to London, half the City would have joined me."

" You have thought of this too late, my lord," said the duchess, with something of reproach in her tone. " Had you followed the bolder course I suggested, you would have found it the best. You ought never to have resigned the Protectorship. You have gained nothing by submission, but have made your enemies more resolute against you."

" So I find," said the duke. " I did wrong to yield."

" And you will do wrong now if you fly. Your enemies have grown too strong

for you, and you will justify their accusations."

"But I would fain learn Augustin's plan before I reject it," said the duke. "Send him to me."

"I will do as you enjoin me," replied the duchess; "but I counsel you not to make the attempt, lest it fail. Better remain as you are."

Shortly after the duchess had departed, Augustin made his appearance, being admitted by the guard without any difficulty.

"You have a plan, I understand, by which you think my escape from this tower may be effected," said the duke. "I pray you explain it to me, that I may judge of its practicability."

"There is no difficulty whatever about the plan, your grace, though there may be some danger. You have only to descend

by means of a rope ladder, which is already provided, from the summit of the tower to the fosse on the south side of the castle walls."

"But with a guard at the door, how am I to gain the summit of the tower?" demanded the duke.

"The guard will not prevent you," said Augustin, significantly. "Nay, more, he will fasten the ladder for you to the battlements of the tower, so that you will only have to descend. As your grace is doubtless aware, the fosse is dry, deep, and filled with trees, and if you reach it in safety you will be completely screened from observation. On your descent, you will find me there with a dozen armed men."

"Your plan seems feasible," said the duke. "Will the night be dark?"

"Dark enough for the purpose by nine

o'clock," said Augustin. "There will be no moon."

"I will make the attempt," said the duke.

"I am glad your grace has so decided," said Augustin. "I think there is no risk. Sir Anthony Wingfield has guarded one side of the tower, but has neglected the other, and on that side your grace will escape. At nine o'clock I shall be in waiting for you in the fosse."

He then withdrew, and as the guard opened the door, he intimated by a gesture to the duke that his grace might depend upon him.

The intervening time seemed to pass very slowly. At seven o'clock supper was served, but the duke ate little, and quickly ordered the servants to clear the table, telling them he wanted nothing more.

Not till the hour appointed for flight was he again disturbed. The door was then opened by the guard, who extinguished his lamp as he showed himself.

Not a word passed between him and the duke, but the latter followed the retreating footsteps of his conductor, and mounting a short spiral staircase, quickly reached the summit of the tower.

On the platform, to his surprise, he found three other armed men, and began to fear he was betrayed ; but they did not move, and taking courage, he called out :

“Where is the ladder?”

“There !” replied his conductor.

The duke stepped forward, and could just perceive the rope ladder fastened to one of the battlements overlooking the fosse.

He was just preparing to descend by it,

when his arm was seized by a strong grasp, and a mocking voice, which he recognised as that of Sir Anthony Wingfield, called out :

“ Your grace has neglected to ask my permission to depart, and I cannot accord it. Be pleased to return to your room.”

XIII.

HOW THE EARL OF WARWICK AND THE LORDS OF THE COUNCIL CAME TO WINDSOR CASTLE; AND HOW THEY WERE RECEIVED BY THE KING.

NEXT day the town of Windsor put on an air of festivity and rejoicing, in consequence of information received at an early hour, by the officers of the corporation, that the Earl of Warwick, with the Lords of the Council, were coming in state to the castle.

Such an opportunity of displaying their satisfaction at the fall of one minister, of

whom they were tired, and at the rise of another, from whom they hoped to gain something, was not to be neglected.

Accordingly, preparations were made to decorate the town; and long before the splendid cavalcade arrived, all was ready.

The townsfolk were dressed in their holiday attire, the houses hung with garlands, youths and maidens crowded the street as if a fair were being held, and the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses rode forth to meet the triumphant earl, and show him all the honour in their power.

Before the mayor and his companions, who were in their robes of office, and tolerably well mounted, reached Eton, they saw the grand cavalcade advancing, and drew up, while a great number of the townsfolk, young and old, who had accompanied them,

ranged themselves on either side of the road, and prepared to shout lustily.

Truly, the cavalcade presented a splendid spectacle, and well repaid those who had come forth to gaze at it. Even in the days of the late king, nothing more magnificent had been seen, for the Earl of Warwick was exceedingly fond of show. He was attended on this occasion by three hundred horsemen, well mounted and well accoutred, their helmets and breastplates glittering in the sun.

The proud earl, who now looked prouder than ever, rode at the head of the procession, with his eldest son, Lord Lisle, on the left, and the Earl of Southampton on the right. Mounted on a superbly caparisoned charger, he wore a gown of crimson velvet, bordered with ermine. Round his neck was the collar of the Garter, with the lesser

George attached to it, and his bonnet was covered with pearls.

The Earl of Southampton vied with Warwick in splendour of apparel, and was equally well mounted ; but not being so fine a man, he did not produce the same effect. Southampton, formerly Lord Wriothesley, and Chancellor, was of a haughty and imperious disposition, and fiercely attacked those who differed from him in opinion. He was one of the Protector's bitterest enemies, but had no real friendship for Warwick, though he had combined with him to accomplish Somerset's downfall.

Southampton had conformed to a certain extent to the new doctrines during the late king's lifetime, but he was firmly attached to the religion of Rome, and detested Cranmer.

The principal personages in the procession

beyond those above mentioned were Lord Chancellor Rich, a lawyer whose adroitness and pliancy of character had enabled him to supersede the proud and unbending Southampton; the Earls of Huntingdon, Shrewsbury, and Arundel—the latter being one of the old nobility, and disappointed that he had not been a member of the Council; the Marquis of Northampton, and Lord Saint John, Great Master; Lord Russell, Privy Seal, and Sir William Herbert, one of the chief gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, both of whom had just arrived from Andover; Sir William Paulet, Sir Anthony Brown, Master of the Horse, and Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower.

Among these important personages, inclusive of Warwick and Southampton, there were seven knight-companions of the Garter, all of whom were magnificently attired

in doublets of silk or satin, and gowns of embroidered velvet; and each was attended by half a dozen richly attired and well-mounted servants, who greatly increased the number of the cavalcade.

A brief halt was made to exchange a few courteous words with the Mayor of Windsor and the officers of the corporation, who warmly congratulated the Earl of Warwick and the Council on their success. The speeches uttered on the occasion were almost drowned by the shouts of the bystanders.

After this, the mayor and his companions joined the procession, which was welcomed by the discharge of cannon from the towers and walls of the castle.

No halt was made in the town, but Warwick rode up the street leading to the castle gate, bowing right and left, praising the

beauty of the fair damsels who crowded around him, and having something pleasant to say to all. His gracious manner, so different from the Protector's haughty deportment, caused the greatest enthusiasm.

Amid general acclamations, accompanied by the flourishes of trumpets and the roar of ordnance, the cavalcade entered the Lower Ward, where they dismounted.

Warwick and the Lords of the Council were then conducted by several officers of the household to the presence-chamber, where they found the king with Cranmer and Sir John Cheke.

Edward received them with the greatest cordiality, and clasped Warwick round the neck as he knelt before him.

“ You have rendered me a great service, my lord, and I thank you,” he said.

“ Your majesty shall have no cause for

complaint in future," rejoined Warwick, as he arose. "Had we been sooner aware of the Protector's misconduct, he should not have been allowed to proceed so far."

To the other nobles and knights Edward was equally gracious, and expressed the greatest delight at beholding them again after their long absence.

Shortly afterwards trumpets were sounded, and the illustrious company were invited in the king's name by Sir Anthony Wingfield to a banquet in Saint George's Hall.

Preceded by trumpeters, blowing lively fanfares, and marshalled by the vice-chamberlain and a great number of officers, the king and his guests were conducted to the magnificent hall in which the banquet was to be served.

At the entrance were stationed yeomen

of the guard, and within were halberdiers, henchmen, and a crowd of attendants.

More than a hundred feet in length, and proportionately lofty, lighted by tall windows, filled with rich painted glass, possessing an exquisitely carved and groined ceiling, this magnificent apartment was then, as now, accounted one of the finest in Europe. Its walls were covered with superb tapestry, one compartment representing Saint George encountering the dragon, and another the traditional origin of the illustrious Order of the Garter. Chief among the portraits was that of Henry the Eighth, whose arms were emblazoned in several places.

At the east end of the hall was the throne, approached by three marble steps, and surmounted by a canopy, on the front of which was embroidered in gold Saint

George's Cross, encircled by the Garter, and bearing the motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

Edward did not occupy the state chair, as that seat of dignity would have removed him from the guests he desired to honour, but took a raised seat at the head of the table, and was thus enabled to converse with Cranmer, Warwick, and Southampton.

Lord Lisle performed the office of cup-bearer to his majesty, and stood beside him during the repast. From the notice he obtained, the handsome young lord promised speedily to become a favourite with the king.

It was remarked by all that Edward was in unusually good spirits, and it was naturally inferred that he was really glad to be freed from the restraint imposed upon him by the Protector.

The banquet was splendid, but the young king did not remain long at table, but retired early with Lord Lisle.

Previously, however, to his departure, he desired Sir Anthony Wingfield to explain to his guests that they must not disturb themselves.

Instead of returning to the presence-chamber, he passed out into the Horn Court, which chanced to be empty at the time, and made his way thence to the North Terrace, attended by Lord Lisle.

After gazing for a few moments at the splendid prospect now opened upon him, Edward was about to continue his walk towards the east-end terrace, when he perceived two female figures approaching from that direction.

In one of them he immediately recognised Margaret, but he could not distin-

guish the features of the other, since her head was turned towards her companion, with whom she was earnestly conversing. She was young, richly dressed in blue velvet, and apparently beautiful.

Lord Lisle told him she was the Lady Anne Seymour, the Duke of Somerset's eldest daughter.

"So I see," replied the king, as the damsel looked towards them. "Perhaps you would rather not meet her?"

"Nay, my liege; I care not," said Lord Lisle. "'Tis for your majesty to answer whether you will listen to her. She will certainly address you."

"I cannot retreat," rejoined the king.

Lady Anne Seymour could not be more than eighteen, and was exquisitely beautiful, though her countenance bore traces of affliction.

She had blonde tresses and blue eyes, lovely features, and a singularly fair and delicate complexion.

Lord Lisle could not behold her unmoved, though he had affected indifference.

No sooner did she become aware that the king stood before her, than she sprang forward, and threw herself at his feet ; but when she discovered that Lord Lisle was standing beside him, she instantly arose, and left her petition unuttered.

In a low voice she said :

“It would be useless, I feel, to supplicate your majesty for justice to my father while the son of his deadly enemy is standing by.”

“Anything Lord Lisle could say would not influence me, fair cousin Anne,” said the king. “You know I have always loved you.”

“Till lately I thought so, my liege,” she rejoined; “but my opinion has greatly changed. You once loved my father—at least, you led him to believe so.”

“I did love him,” said the king—“loved him and trusted him; but he has deeply deceived me.”

“So says the Earl of Warwick, my liege,” replied the Lady Anne. “But it is not so.”

“I have conclusive proofs of his guilt,” said the king.

“Proofs prepared by Warwick and his adherents,” rejoined the Lady Anne. “One day, your majesty will regret that you ever listened to the traitor.”

XIV.

HOW THE LORD LISLE AND THE LADY ANNE SEYMOUR
PLIGHTED THEIR FAITH.

EDWARD manifested some displeasure, and bade the Lady Anne restrain herself.

“ You speak too boldly, fair cousin,” he said.

“ 'Tis difficult to speak calmly, my liege, when one has to defend a father from false charges,” she rejoined. “ I ask the Duke of Somerset's life from you—first, because he is your mother's brother ; next, because he has ever loved you as a son ; thirdly,

because he has governed your kingdom for you ably and well during the early part of your minority, and would have done so till the period arrived when, by your great father's will, you could assume the full sovereign sway, had he been allowed. Hereafter, when, haply, it may be too late, and when the dark designs of his enemies are revealed, you will do the duke justice. Already the severest punishment has been inflicted upon him. He is here, imprisoned, suddenly deprived of all his offices, and threatened with the confiscation of his property, while his enemies come to triumph over their victim, and are feasted."

"I'll hear no more, cousin," said the king. "The duke, your father, will have a fair trial, and if his innocence can be proved, he will be acquitted."

"That does not follow," said the Lady

Anne. “ Your majesty is resolved to send him to the Tower?”

“ I cannot do otherwise,” replied the king.

Then turning to Margaret, he added :

“ A word with you, fair mistress.”

While Margaret obeyed the injunction, and the king withdrew to a short distance to speak to her, Lord Lisle came up to the Lady Anne, and said :

“ Do not regard me as an enemy, I pray you !”

“ Wherefore not ?” she rejoined.

“ Because I love you,” he said, regarding her passionately.

“ Love me !” she exclaimed, scornfully.

“ I would gladly prove my love by delivering the duke, your father. But he is too well guarded. 'Twill be easier to libe-

rate him from the Tower than from this castle."

"I have little hope of his deliverance from either place," said the Lady Anne. "Nor do I think flight would profit him much. But I believe you might obtain his pardon from the king. Do this, and you may count on my gratitude."

"But if I should unhappily fail?" said Lord Lisle.

"Then your suit will fail likewise," she replied.

"The attempt shall be made," said Lord Lisle. "But I must act cautiously. Be on the terrace again this evening when the moon rises, and I will let you know the result. Adieu! I am summoned."

And he rejoined the king, who instantly quitted the terrace.

“ What did his majesty say to you ? ” inquired the Lady Anne of Margaret.

“ He said that Augustin Stewart was suspected of planning the Duke of Somerset’s attempted escape from the Lieutenant’s Tower, and bade me advise the young man’s immediate departure from the castle if he would avoid arrest.

“ I thought he was gone,” said the Lady Anne.

“ No ; he is here still,” replied Margaret.

“ Then bid him fly,” said the Lady Anne, “ or he will certainly be sent to the Tower.”

Again on the terrace, and at a later hour.

As the moon had not yet overtopped the high buildings fronting the rampart, the Broad Walk was buried in obscurity. However, this mattered little, since the beautiful

and extensive valley, commanded by the terrace, was brightly illumined. Monastic-looking Eton, with its groves and meads, could be plainly distinguished on the further side of the glittering river. The Home Park, with its venerable timber, could be seen on the right, partly encircled by the Thames; while at the foot of the eminence on which the castle was reared, was visible the ancient and picturesque town of Windsor.

But the noble youth who sought the terrace on that lovely night, did not come there to enjoy a moonlight prospect of the valley, but in the hope of meeting one who held his heart in thrall.

The hour appointed had arrived, but she was not there, nor did she immediately appear, and misgivings had already begun

to assail him, when he perceived her coming rapidly along, on the dark side of the terrace.

In another minute he had joined her. She was wrapped in a mantle, and appeared agitated and almost breathless. But she quickly recovered.

“ I have just quitted the duke, my father,” she said. “ I have been with him for some hours, and have striven to cheer him, but in vain. He looks upon his doom as sealed, and is convinced the Earl of Warwick will only be satisfied with his life. I did not dare to tell him that the son of his bitterest enemy had promised to plead for him with the king. Have you fulfilled that promise? Have you obtained a pardon for me? Alas! your hesitation proves you have failed.”

“ You have conjectured rightly,” said

Lord Lisle. “ The king is impracticable ; but shall I speak to my father ? Though his majesty is deaf to all others, he might listen to *him*.”

“ No,” replied Lady Anne ; “ the Duke of Somerset would never condescend to beg his life from Warwick.”

“ Then I despair of saving your father,” said Lord Lisle. “ But perhaps the king’s present anger may abate.”

“ I do not think it will,” replied the Lady Anne. “ I am deeply beholden to you for what you have done for me. But we must meet no more.”

“ Do not come to that fatal determination now,” implored Lord Lisle.

“ Why should we indulge hopes that are not likely to be realised ? Should my father be brought to the block, I will never wed you.”

“ ‘Twill be time enough to decide when he is condemned,” said Lord Lisle. “ But I still believe he will be pardoned, and shall not cease my efforts to save him.”

“ But not in the manner I have interdicted,” said the Lady Anne. “ Promise me that.”

“ I will obey you in all things,” replied Lord Lisle. “ Before we separate,” he added, taking her hand, and pressing it to his lips, “ tell me you requite my love.”

She made no answer.

“ Speak!” he cried, earnestly.

“ *I have* loved you,” she replied.

“ What have I done to forfeit your regard?” he said. “ What share have I had in this revolution? I am not one of the Council.”

“ You are the Earl of Warwick’s son.”

“ But not your father’s enemy.”

There was a brief pause, during which it was evident she was relenting.

“ I feel I have been unjust towards you,” she said, at length. “ I own I love you.”

Pressing her to his heart, he exclaimed :

“ There must be no further misunderstanding between us. Let us plight our faith before Heaven. Swear to be mine, as I vow to be yours !”

She murmured her assent.

“ Heaven register the oath !” he solemnly ejaculated.

At that moment footsteps were heard, and as Lord Lisle looked round he perceived a tall figure coming from the direction of the Winchester Tower.”

“ Someone comes this way,” he said, in a low tone. “ It looks like my father.”

“ The Earl of Warwick here !” exclaimed

the Lady Anne, in great alarm. “ I would not have him see me with you. Come with me.”

Fear lent them wings, and in a very short time they were at the further end of the terrace. Turning the corner, she instantly entered a gate from which she had come forth, and disappeared. Their flight had been so rapid, they had not been able to exchange a single word.

Lord Lisle was about to follow her, but on trying to open the postern, he found it fastened inside.

The Eastern Terrace was fully lighted up by the moon, and as the young lord looked round, he beheld his father.

The Earl of Warwick came quickly up to him, and said, in a severe tone :

“ I know you have just parted with the

Lady Anne Seymour. You must think of her no more."

Aware it would be idle to remonstrate, Lord Lisle remained silent.

XV.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET PARTED WITH THE DUCHESS
AND HIS DAUGHTER.

THE day had arrived on which the deposed Lord Protector was to be carried in triumph by his successful enemies to the Tower.

At an early hour the duchess and the Lady Anne Seymour came to the Lieutenant's Tower.

They found the noble prisoner looking haggard and ill, for he had passed a sleepless night; but they strove to cheer him,

and besought him to bear himself resolutely before the public.

“Your grace will be judged by your demeanour,” said the duchess. “If that is firm, the people will deem you unjustly dealt with, and take your part; but if you appear mortified and depressed, they will side with the Council.”

“The Earl of Warwick is sure to assume an insolent and triumphant air,” said the Lady Anne. “But think of his falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude, and regard him with scorn. Do so, and you will humiliate him, even in his hour of triumph.”

“Had my enemies any generosity, any compassion,” said the duke, “they would have sent me by water to the Tower, and not expose me to this frightful ordeal. The ignominy is worse than death.”

“Regard it not in that light, my dear

lord," said the duchess; "but as an aggravation of the wrongs done you. Act as I have suggested, and the triumph will be yours."

"Doubt not every look and gesture will be watched and commented on, father," said the Lady Anne. "Keep them, therefore, under strict control. Would I could ride by your side!"

"Nay; that would quite unman me," said the duke. "But I marvel who will ride beside me—perhaps Warwick, and his son, Lord Lisle."

"Nay, not Lord Lisle, father," cried the Lady Anne. "He would not act as your guard."

"Wherefore not?" said the Duke. "I would rather have him than any of the others. But most likely it will be my worst enemy, Southampton. I hoped the

king would see me ere I am taken hence. But I do not think he will come now."

"Do not expect him, my lord," said the duchess. "He has no heart. If he loved you, he could not have consented to your imprisonment."

"Ay, he is now wholly in Warwick's hands," said the duke.

Just then the door was opened, and Lord Lisle came in. A guard could be seen standing outside.

"I have come to inform your grace," said the young lord, bowing to Somerset, "that the hour of departure is at hand."

"'Tis earlier than I expected," said the duke, rising. "But I am ready. Are you to attend upon me?"

"Your grace will ride between the Earls of Southampton and Huntingdon," replied Lord Lisle.

“I thought as much,” said the duke.

Lord Lisle then withdrew, but remained outside with the officer and the guard.

Tenderly embracing the duchess and his daughter, the duke now prepared for departure, and while a few farewell words passed between them, sounds announced that a large party of horse were assembling in the Lower Ward. At the same time trumpets were loudly blown in the upper court to summon the lords.

As it seemed impossible that the duke could disengage himself from the embraces of the duchess and his daughter, Lord Lisle, who seemed greatly moved, was obliged to present himself again, upon which the duke tore himself away, passed quickly out, and descended the spiral staircase.

With a deeply sympathising look at the Lady Anne, Lord Lisle followed him.

Overcome by anguish, the duchess sank into a chair; but her daughter flew to the window that commanded the Lower Ward.

“The court-yard is quite filled with horses and men,” she called out to the duchess. “The guard is now drawn up, and the Lords of the Council are there, with their attendants. Most of them are already mounted, and taking their places in the cavalcade.”

“But where is the duke, your father?” interrupted the duchess. “Is he on horse-back?”

“I have not yet discovered him,” replied the Lady Anne. “Ah, I see him now! He is in the very front of the procession, with the Earls of Southampton and Huntingdon

beside him, and Lord Lisle and Sir Anthony Wingfield behind."

"Does he bear himself firmly?"

"He looks as he did when Lord Protector," replied the Lady Anne. "Both the lords with him still seem to feel his power. But more prisoners are brought forth. They have a guard with them, but are allowed to ride together. They are Sir Thomas Smith, Sir John Thynne, Sir Michael Stanhope, and good Master Cecil."

"How look they?"

"As you could wish," replied the Lady Anne—"bold and indifferent as any of the duke's enemies."

"But where is Warwick?"

"He is conversing with the king," replied the Lady Anne.

"With the king!" exclaimed the duchess.

“I did not think his majesty would have been present on this occasion.”

“He is standing with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the young Lord Strange on the steps of Wolsey’s tomb-house,” replied the Lady Anne. “Some yeomen of the guard are near him; but I can see him quite plainly.”

“ ‘Tis contrived to mortify the duke, but it will fail,” said the duchess.

“Warwick now takes leave of his majesty, and mounts his steed,” said the Lady Anne. “He has a haughty and exulting look. He takes his place at the rear of the cavalcade, and the Marquis of Northampton is with him. They are all in their places—the Lord Chancellor, the Great Master, the Earls of Arundel and Shrewsbury, Lord Russell, Sir William Petre, Sir Thomas

Cheney, Sir Anthony Brown, and Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower. All are now mounted, and preparing to depart. Hark ! the trumpets sound. The advanced guard passes through the gate. The duke comes next.”

“ Is he alone ? ” asked the duchess.

“ Not alone—but slightly in advance of the others ; and the people shout, thinking he is the leader of the cavalcade.”

“ I can hear their shouts,” said the duchess.

“ I will look no more,” said the Lady Anne, coming from the window.

In less than five minutes the crowded and noisy court was silent and empty.

XVI.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WAS TAKEN FROM WINDSOR CASTLE TO THE TOWER.

ABOUT two hours after its departure from Windsor Castle, the cavalcade reached the precincts of London.

Throughout the journey, the Duke of Somerset had maintained a haughty deportment, and did not exchange a word with either of the nobles who rode beside him.

He experienced no annoyance from the inhabitants of the villages and small towns

through which the procession passed. On the contrary, the country people generally who flocked to look at him, expressed sympathy, and would have delivered him if they could.

Apparently, the duke took little notice of any object during the long ride, which would have been pleasant enough under other circumstances, for the day was bright and fine, and the country beautiful; but when the tower of Saint Paul's Cathedral came in sight, he gazed at it for some time, as if sad thoughts were passing through his mind.

London was entered by Saint James's Park—then really a park; and a short street, composed of ancient habitations, brought them to Charing Cross, where a large crowd was assembled.

A halt was made in this place by order

of the Earl of Warwick, probably with the design of testing the public feeling towards the deposed Protector ; and the spot was well chosen for the purpose, since the grand palatial mansion — the erection of which had rendered him so unpopular — was not far off. Things happened as Warwick had foreseen. Many galling and offensive observations respecting Somerset House were made in the hearing of the duke.

One fellow, who put himself prominently forward, and had the air of a low tavern jester, put these questions to him, in a mocking voice :

“ Can your grace tell us what noble it was who demolished the palaces of the Bishops of Chester and Worcester to build himself a grand house ? Can your grace tell us who destroyed Saint Mary-le-Strand, and Pardon Church, and an Inn of Chan-

cery, to provide himself with building materials? Can your grace tell us by what means a certain great personage contrived to pay his own workmen two hundred marks a day, but could not pay the king's forces?"

He was proceeding in this strain, amid general laughter, when he was stopped by Lord Lisle, who dealt him a heavy blow with his riding-whip, and sent him howling off.

Immediately afterwards, the cavalcade was again in motion, and its course being along the Strand it soon reached the gates of the duke's noble palace — a far finer building than the present edifice, be it remarked — when the taunts and jeers recommenced, but were soon checked by Lord Lisle.

A great number of persons would have accompanied the procession, but were pre-

vented by the guard, and no interruption of any kind occurred.

But the Strand had not its usual lively air. The upper windows of the houses on either side the street were thrown open, and filled with spectators, chiefly of the gentler sex, whose sympathies were evidently with the noble prisoner.

At that time there was a stone cross in the Strand, which stood where the May-Pole was subsequently reared. This cross was without a head, and a miserable varlet had climbed to the top of it to shake his cap at the duke, but was speedily dislodged.

Still pursuing its course, the cavalcade passed through Temple Bar, and entered Fleet-street. Here the houses differed greatly in appearance from those in the Strand. Instead of being garnished with

spectators, as in the former thoroughfare, the windows were closed, and the doors guarded by householders armed with halbersts.

As these precautions were taken every-where, it would almost seem that a rising in favour of Scmerset had been anticipated by the citizens.

Indeed, at Fleet Bridge, where another crowd was collected, shouts were heard of “Heaven deliver the good duke from his enemies!”

Alarmed by these cries, Warwick and his associates hurried the cavalcade over the little bridge, where it was not unlikely an attempt to deliver the duke might have been intended, but none occurred.

Ludgate Hill was ascended, and the cavalcade having passed through the gate, had reached the large open place in front

of the porch of the magnificent old cathedral.

A stoppage occurred here, as it was expected the procession would be met at this point by the lord mayor and the chief citizens.

During this halt the Earl of Warwick rode up to the front to confer with the Earls of Southampton and Huntingdon.

While he was there the duke begged to be allowed to enter the cathedral for a few minutes.

Greatly surprised at the request, Warwick hesitated.

“ I pledge my word to return,” said the duke; “ nor will I be absent more than five minutes. I conceived the wish to kneel at the altar as I rode from Windsor.”

“ Enough!” rejoined Warwick. “ Go

in, since you desire it. I will send my son with you."

In another minute, to the great surprise of all the principal personages in the procession, Somerset was seen to mount the steps, and enter the porch, followed by Lord Lisle.

" Warwick must be mad to trust the duke thus without a guard!" remarked Lord Chancellor Rich.

But when, in some two or three minutes, the duke came back and remounted his horse, the chancellor said :

" No; I see it is Somerset who is mad, and not Warwick."

The duke had only entered one of the open chapels, and, having, knelt down within it and breathed a prayer, returned.

Meanwhile, word was brought by a messenger that the lord mayor and the chief

citizens were waiting in Cheapside, near the cross, to receive the Duke of Somerset from the lords, and conduct him to the Tower.

Accordingly, the procession was again put in motion, and took its way along Cheapside, the Earl of Warwick now riding in front.

In the good old City of London, in the days of its beauty, when none of the old picturesque houses had been destroyed, no street could compare with Cheapside, either for width or for the size and stately appearance of its habitations.

Many of these houses were five or six stories high, each story projecting beyond the other; possessed richly ornamented gables, and large bow-windows; and were inhabited by goldsmiths and jewellers, drapers, and other wealthy traders.

As in Fleet-street, the windows and doors were closed, and the houses guarded by the owners and their apprentices armed with bills. But the feeling of these worthy citizens was evidently friendly to the deposed Protector.

In front of the lofty and beautifully carved cross, which, as already explained, constituted the chief ornament of the wide and picturesque street, were drawn up the civic authorities.

They were all on horseback, in their robes, and attended by a larger guard. Beside Sir Henry Amcotes, then lord mayor, was the sword-bearer, with a couple of trumpeters in front. Just behind the lord mayor were the sheriffs, Master John York and Master Richard Turk, with Master Brooke, the recorder; and behind them were the whole of the aldermen.

With great formality, the Duke of Somerset and the other prisoners were delivered by Warwick to the lord mayor, who received them with every mark of sympathy and respect.

On the conclusion of the ceremonial, during which the duke comported himself with great dignity and firmness, Warwick, and the whole of the Council, with their attendants and guard, quitted the city, and proceeded to Whitehall.

The duke now rode by the side of the lord mayor, and was everywhere regarded with deep interest by the spectators.

From Cheapside, he was taken down Lombard-street, and thence into Grace-church-street, both which thoroughfares were lined with sympathising spectators, giving the duke clearly to understand that he had still a large party in the city, and

rather alarming the lord mayor and his brethren.

Tower-street was now reached, and in another moment the grim fortress burst upon them in all its sombre majesty.

How different did it now appear to the duke from what it had ever appeared before! Hitherto, he had only looked upon it as a palace, or as a fortress. Now he regarded it as a prison, where once immured, he might only come forth to die. With a rapidity of thought that surprised himself, he recalled all who had lately been confined there, and had perished by the hand of the headsman—the last being his own brother.

By this time they had reached the foot of Tower Hill, and the permanent scaffold could be descried on the brow of the emi-

nence, but the duke averted his gaze from it.

As they approached the Tower, the trumpets were sounded loudly, and immediately Sir Leonard Chamberlain, the lieutenant newly appointed by Warwick and his party, came forth on horseback with a guard of halberdiers.

“I deliver his grace the Duke of Somerset, and the other prisoners with him, into your custody, good Master Lieutenant,” said the lord mayor.

“I receive them from your lordship,” replied the lieutenant, bowing.

Somerset and his fellow-prisoners then took a formal leave of the lord mayor, the sheriffs, and aldermen, and were conducted by the lieutenant and the guard of halberdiers across the drawbridge, and

through the two strong gates to the Lower Ward.

Thence, after the usual formalities had been gone through, they were taken through the gate of the Bloody Tower to the Inner Ward, where the Duke of Somerset was lodged in the upper room of the Beauchamp Tower; Sir Thomas Smith, and Sir Michael Stanhope in the Bowyer's Tower, and Sir John Thynne and Cecil in the Flint Tower.

XVII.

HOW THE KING VISITED THE DUKE OF SOMERSET IN THE TOWER.

No sooner was the Duke of Somerset safely lodged in the Tower, than the Council, which was now completely controlled by the ambitious Earl of Warwick, proceeded to choose six of their number governors of the king, with Warwick at their head; thus conferring all Somerset's power upon the earl, without the title of Protector, which it was deemed best to discontinue.

At the same time Warwick secured for

himself the important office of Lord High Admiral, and rewarded his supporters for the assistance they had rendered him in the revolution. The Marquis of Northampton, his confidant and adviser, was made Great Chamberlain; Lord Russell was created Earl of Bedford; and Saint John Earl of Wiltshire.

While rewarding his friends, Warwick punished his enemies, and Southampton and Arundel, whom he suspected of treachery, were dismissed from the Council.

Warwick's firm determination was to bring his fallen rival to the block, and he would, undoubtedly, have carried out the design had it not been prevented by the king. Edward was still strongly attached to his uncle, and already began to feel some compunction for the severity with which he had treated him.

Since the change in the Government, the king had quitted Windsor, and proceeded to Greenwich Palace, where Cranmer and Sir John Cheke were now staying with him.

He often spoke to them about the duke, and lamented it had been necessary to send him to the Tower, but hoped he might soon be liberated.

“Yesterday his grace was to be examined by the Council at the Tower,” observed Cranmer; “and if the high crimes with which he is charged are established against him, he will be punished with death!”

“With death?” exclaimed Edward.

“Ay, my liege,” rejoined Cranmer. “The Earl of Warwick tells me he cannot possibly escape. To me his death will be a great grief, and a heavy blow to the re-

formed religion, of which he was the chief support."

"It must not come to this," said Edward. "Already the matter has gone too far."

At this juncture, Warwick himself, who had just arrived at the palace, entered the cabinet, and knelt before the king.

"I have come to inform your majesty that yesterday the Duke of Somerset was examined by the Council, and confessed his numerous crimes."

"What will follow?" inquired the king.

"He will be tried by his peers in Westminster Hall," replied Warwick; "and as he must be found guilty after his acknowledgment of his offences, he will be condemned to death!"

"My lord, he must not die!" said Edward. "I will not consent to his execu-

tion. I will not sign the death-warrant of a second uncle."

"My liege," rejoined Warwick, "the Archbishop of Canterbury will tell you that the crimes of the Duke of Somerset are far greater than those of his brother, the admiral."

"I will not judge his grace," said Cranmer, "and I pray that he may be pardoned."

"If he is found guilty, I will exercise my royal prerogative of mercy," said Edward.

"My liege, before you decide on this course," observed Warwick, "I pray you to consider what the duke has done. It has been proved against him—nay, he has confessed—that at divers times and places he falsely declared that we, the Lords of the Council in London, intended to kill him,

but that if he died, the king should die likewise; thus clearly showing that he meditated your majesty's destruction."

"No; it seems to me that he simply meant to deter you from injuring him," observed the king.

"My liege," said Warwick, "the duke has acknowledged that he declared to several young lords attending upon your royal person, that we, the Council, intended to destroy your majesty, and required them to put your majesty in remembrance thereof, with intent to make sedition between you and your nobles."

"A mere device," said the king.

"I could mention many other treasonable offences, my liege," continual Warwick, "which show that the duke does not merit pardon."

“ Nevertheless, I will pardon him,” said Edward.

“ I entirely approve of your majesty’s merciful determination,” observed Cranmer. “ That the duke uttered the indiscreet expressions cited, may be true; but that he seriously meant them is improbable. His grace’s worst crime, in my opinion, is his undue assumption of authority; but for that his deposition from the Protectorship is sufficient punishment.”

“ I will go to the Tower and see him,” exclaimed Edward, whose heart had become suddenly softened towards his uncle. “ Your lordship shall go with me; and your grace likewise,” he added to Cranmer.

“ Willingly,” replied the archbishop.

Warwick felt that this step would thwart his designs, but did not venture to oppose it.

“I will order the barge for your majesty,” said Sir John Cheke, quitting the cabinet.

“Who are now the chief prisoners in the Tower, my lord?” asked the king, of Warwick.

“The chief prisoner there, my liege, was once the chief subject of the realm,” replied the earl. “As your majesty will guess, it is the old Duke of Norfolk, who was committed to the Tower towards the close of your father’s reign for crimes and treason worse than those of Somerset, and was only saved from just punishment by the king’s death.”

“He cannot be pardoned,” remarked Edward.

“Impossible!” exclaimed Cranmer. “He has been treated far too leniently. Were he at liberty, he would do incalculable mischief; but he is harmless where he is.”

“ There he shall remain,” said Edward.
“ What other prisoners have you, my lord ? ”

“ None of any importance, my liege, except Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire,” replied Warwick, “ and two Scottish nobles, Maxwell and Panmure.”

“ There are the three prelates, Gardiner, Heath, and Day,” observed Cranmer; “ and Bonner, who is proving contumacious, will be soon sent to join them.”

“ I shall visit none of them, except the Duke of Somerset,” said Edward.

“ And I would fain dissuade your majesty from visiting him,” rejoined Warwick.

Just then an usher, with two other servants in the royal liveries, entered to inform the king that the barge was ready.

Thereupon, Edward went forth, and embarking on board the magnificent vessel

with Cranmer, Warwick, and a great number of pages and halberdiers, was rowed up to the Tower wharf.

Before the king landed, Sir Leonard Chamberlain, the lieutenant, came on board to ascertain the royal pleasure, and was informed by the Earl of Warwick that his majesty was about to visit the Duke of Somerset in the Beauchamp Tower; but the earl added that no previous intimation must be given to the noble prisoner.

Shortly afterwards, Edward disembarked with his suite, and amid the beating of drums and braying of trumpets was ceremoniously conducted to the Green, where the lieutenant inquired whether his majesty would visit the duke at once.

On receiving an answer in the affirmative, Sir Leonard caused the door to be unlocked

by a gaoler, and entering, announced the king in a loud voice.

As Edward came in, Somerset, who was writing at a small table, instantly arose, and throwing himself at the king's feet, kissed his hand, which was not withheld on this occasion.

“Oh, my dear liege!” exclaimed the duke, much affected, “how can I thank you sufficiently for your goodness? This visit, as gracious as it is unlooked for, makes me amends for all I have endured since I last beheld your majesty.”

“Arise, I pray your grace!” said Edward, kindly.

“No, my dear liege; I will not rise till I have obtained your forgiveness for my many offences. I have ever loved you—not as a nephew, but as a son; and the

severest part of my punishment has been my enforced separation from your majesty. I have sought to serve you, but have failed. Punish me for my errors, but let me serve you still."

"Rise, my lord," said the king. "I find you have acknowledged your guilt, and am glad of it. I have come to tell you that whatever may be the sentence against you, you may depend upon a pardon from me."

The duke was about to give utterance to his thanks, but the king stopped him.

"Understand," said his majesty, "I cannot restore the great office from which you have been deposed. I cannot restore you to the Privy Council. I cannot restore your forfeited estates."

"I ask you not to do so, my liege. I am

well content with the pardon you have promised me. That is all I desire."

Hitherto Warwick had remained in the background, but he now came forward.

"It is my duty to state to your majesty," he said, in a stern tone, "that public justice will not be satisfied unless a heavy fine is imposed on the Duke of Somerset. His life may be spared, but absolute pardon cannot be granted him, since he has acknowledged his guilt. He must be heavily fined, and humbly submit."

"Fine me as heavily as you will," said the duke. "I have already submitted."

"Nothing more can be expected of his grace," said Cranmer. "His pride has been sufficiently humbled."

"Much has been done," said Edward. "But I shall not rest satisfied unless I am

able to effect a reconciliation between my uncle and the Earl of Warwick."

To judge from the stern looks with which this kindly proposition was received by both nobles, it did not seem likely it would be carried out.

XVIII.

HOW KET AND HIS BROTHER WERE TAKEN FROM THE
TOWER.

CRANMER, who had awaited a fitting opportunity, now interposed.

“My lord,” he observed to Warwick, “after what his majesty has just said, you will not hesitate, I am sure, to comply with his wishes, so far as you yourself are concerned. You can now have no quarrel with the Duke of Somerset. To your grace, I would say,” he added, to the duke, “turn aside all sense of wrong, all desire

for revenge, if any exists ; let your noble and generous feelings have full play, and become friends as heretofore with the Earl of Warwick."

" I am ready to obey his majesty in all things," said Somerset. " I have suffered much, and may attribute what I have suffered to the Earl of Warwick ; but I am willing to forget it all, and to become reconciled to him. In proof of my sincerity, I offer him my hand."

" I take it," replied Warwick, grasping the hand extended towards him ; " and am heartily glad that all our differences are ended."

" You have both done well, my lords," said the king, looking well pleased ; " and I trust no future misunderstanding may arise between you."

" Blessed are the peace-makers," said

Cranmer ; “ and Heaven’s blessings will rest on your majesty for what you have just done.”

“ Your grace is pardoned,” observed Edward to the duke ; “ and you can quit the Tower when you will.”

“ I thank your majesty for your great goodness,” replied Somerset ; “ but I must needs remain here a little longer. Certain formalities have to be gone through before I can be discharged. But I am quite content with the pardon I have received.”

“ Your grace need not doubt that his majesty’s behests will be promptly fulfilled,” said Warwick. “ You are no longer a prisoner.”

“ That assurance is enough,” rejoined the duke. “ I have no desire to quit the Tower at present.”

“ I shall be better satisfied if I take you

hence," said the king. "Come with me to the palace. There you can remain till all matters are arranged."

Greatly pleased by this fresh proof of his royal nephew's returning affection for him, Somerset followed the king out of the prison-chamber, and in another minute was standing upon the Green.

So sudden and unexpected had been his liberation, that it almost appeared like a dream. But the warm congratulations he received from Cranmer and Sir Leonard Chamberlain convinced him he was really free.

Precisely at the moment when the king and those with him issued from the Beauchamp Tower, two prisoners appeared on horseback, attended by a small mounted guard and an officer.

The little party came from one of the

buildings at the back of Saint Peter's Chapel, and was making its way slowly towards the Bloody Tower.

One of the prisoners was a powerfully built, remarkable-looking man, and his appearance excited the king's curiosity.

“Who is that man?” he inquired of the lieutenant.

“It is Ket, the Norfolk rebel, my liege,” replied Sir Leonard. “He and his brother have been confined for some time in the Tower, and are now about to be taken down to Norwich for execution, by order of Sir Edmund Windham, high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.”

“Ay, that is the desperate rebel, who obtained possession of the city of Norwich, my liege, and gave me so much trouble to dislodge him,” observed the Earl of Warwick to the king. “He will be hanged on

Norwich Castle, and his brother on the lofty tower of Wymondham Church. The young man who commands the guard acted as deputy mayor of Norwich during the rebellion."

"Augustin Stewart! I have seen him at Hampton-Court and Windsor," rejoined the king. "Bid the escort halt for a moment. I am curious to behold Ket and his brother more closely."

Warwick immediately complied, and the party at once halted.

The prisoners were now not more than twenty yards off, and quite aware who was before them. Robert Ket was not much changed by his imprisonment, though he had been placed in an underground dungeon, but was still a stalwart-looking personage. As his hands were not bound, he took off his cap, and shouted "God save

King Edward!" and his example was followed by his brother.

Robert Ket then made some observations to his conductor, which the latter declined to repeat; but being called by the king, Augustin said that Ket declared he was no rebel, but one of his majesty's most loyal subjects, and that he should die professing his devotion to the king.

"I will not prevent him doing so," replied Edward. "Proceed on your way."

As soon as the rebels were gone by, the king, with the Duke of Somerset and the others, entered the palace.

XIX.

HOW KET WAS HANGED FROM THE KEEP OF NORWICH
CASTLE.

Not till the third day after leaving London did the party in charge of the two Kets reach Wymondham, where the younger brother was left, and confined in a cell in the old abbey, there to await his execution. Both prisoners had been cheerful during the journey, and appeared indifferent to their fate.

As Robert Ket approached Norwich, a great number of the citizens came forth to

meet him, but no demonstration was made in his favour.

He entered the city by the Saint Giles's Gate, and was met by the mayor and sheriffs, with Sir Edmund Windham, high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, all of whom were on horseback.

The high sheriff directed Augustin to take the prisoner at once to the castle, and an additional guard was sent with him to prevent any attempt at rescue.

As a matter of precaution, Ket's arms were fastened behind his back, and two halberdiers marched beside him, one of whom held his bridle.

Bare-headed, clad in an old jerkin, he was led through the streets. Indeed, he was even taken through the market-place, and past the Guildhall. Murmurs of compassion were occasionally heard, but no

shouts, and it was clear his popularity was gone.

In this manner he was taken to the castle, and delivered to the governor by Augustin Stewart, who recommended that every attention, consistent with his situation, should be shown him.

The governor complied with the request, and instead of loading the prisoner with irons, and placing him in a dungeon, lodged him in a large chamber in Bigod's Tower.

Informed by the governor that his execution would take place at an early hour next morning, and that if he valued his soul's welfare he would do well to prepare, Ket did not neglect the salutary counsel.

Provided with a lamp and a book of prayer, he passed several hours in devotion,

but could not shake off the fearful thoughts that beset him, and it was only towards morning that he obtained any slumber.

Throwing himself on a couch, he at length fell asleep, but was soon aroused by the entrance of Augustin, who, being struck by his haggard appearance, inquired how he had passed the night.

“So badly,” replied Ket, with a shudder, “that to purchase a lengthened existence I would not pass such another. But I am prepared for death, and trust I have made up my account with Heaven. How is the day?”

“It promises to be fine,” replied Augustin. “The morn breaks well.”

“I am glad of it,” remarked Ket. “It matters little to me; yet I would not have the weather wet and gloomy. I have some-

thing to tell you, and must not delay, since time grows short."

"Truly does it," rejoined Augustin. "Speak, then, if it be a matter of any import."

"You shall judge of its import," said Ket. "I have a vast quantity of hidden treasure, collected during the insurrection, which ought not to be lost, but which will be lost, if it be not unearthed. I give it to you, and will tell you where to find it. 'Tis buried on Household Heath, beneath the thirteenth tree, east of the Oak of Reformation—the *thirteenth tree* mark!"

"I hear," said Augustin.

"Dig deep at the foot of that tree," continued Ket, "and you will come to the treasure. I know not the exact amount, but it is large—very large—entirely gold

coin—nobles and rose-nobles. I repeat, I give it all to you."

"I cannot take it," said Augustin.

"Wherefore not?" rejoined Ket. "'Tis lawful plunder. 'Twill make you rich—richer than any other man in Norwich."

"I will not be tempted," said Augustin.

"This is folly," rejoined Ket. "But since you are resolved not to benefit by this treasure, let the Duke of Somerset have it. I am told he has been find ten thousand pounds. This will enable him to pay the penalty."

"The treasure shall be offered to his grace," said Augustin. "That I promise."

"And doubt not it will be accepted," rejoined Ket.

They were still conversing, when the

guard entered to say that Master Conyers, vicar of Saint Martin's, was without, having come to pray with the prisoner, and attend him to the last.

“I should prefer Master Conyers to any other priest,” said Ket. “His presence will greatly comfort me.”

“Let him come in,” said Augustin to the guard. “I have authority to give the order.”

Next moment the worthy vicar was introduced, and advancing towards Ket, gave him his benediction.

“Leave us alone together, my dear son,” said the good divine to Augustin; “this unhappy man may have something to confess to me.”

On this, Augustin withdrew with the guard, and mounted to the summit of the keep.

Looking round, he beheld an extraordinary sight.

It was still early, but an enormous number of persons had already assembled in various parts of the city. More than half the inhabitants of Norwich, it would seem, had come forth to see the great insurgent leader die.

Every position that commanded the summit of the keep, and few did not command it, was already occupied. The market-place, which, seen from the platform, appeared almost at the foot of the Castle Hill, was filled by a large concourse. Many others had gained the roof of Saint Peter's Mancroft. The cathedral close was crowded—so were the tower and roof of the cathedral itself. The roofs of most of the other churches were occupied—Saint Martin's at the Palace, Saint Martin's at the Oak, Saint

Martin's on the Hill, Saint Clement's, Saint Augustine's, Saint John's, Saint Michael's, Saint Stephen's; the roofs of all these churches and of a great many others were occupied, and it was certain the occupants must have been in their places long before it was light.

Never before did an execution create such extraordinary sensation. No one, on any account, would have missed it. As it was understood that ket was to suffer on the eastern side of the keep, facing Mount Surrey and Household Heath, these localities, though distant, were crowded, and a large number of people could be seen assembled on the brow of the hill.

While Augustin was looking round, the sound of trumpets was heard, and several persons on horseback crossed the drawbridges, and entered the castle. These were

the mayor, the high sheriff, the sheriffs, and their attendants.

Alighting in the court, they assembled in the great hall, where they remained for a short time, that all necessary arrangements might be completed.

Meanwhile, an officer, with a drawn sword, accompanied by a dozen arquebusiers, had entered the chamber in which Ket was confined.

The prisoner rose from his knees when the party approached, submitted without a murmur to have his arms pinioned, and then went forth with Master Conyers and the guard.

On reaching the platform, he was surprised to find so many persons there. Besides the mayor and the city authorities, there were Sir Edmund Windham, Sir Robert Knevett of Buckenham Castle, Sir

Thomas Tresham of Intwood, Master John Flowerdew, and several other country gentlemen. All seemed struck by Ket's firm deportment as he bowed gravely around.

From the eastern battlements had been thrust a strong pole, the near end of which was secured to the roof.

To this ominous-looking pole was fastened a halter.

In the next battlement on the right was a piece of ordnance, and beside it stood a cannoneer holding a lighted match. Standing around were several soldiers.

Ket now knelt beside Master Conyers, who had mounted a small wooden stand, and passed a few minutes in prayer.

During this interval a deep silence prevailed.

Arising, he cast a last glance around, the

stand enabling him to look over the battlements.

Opposite him, and only divided from the Castle mound by the Wensum, was Mount Surrey, where he had dwelt when he was leader of thirty thousand men, and deemed himself invincible.

Beyond were the heights of Household Heath, where his camp had been fixed, and where stood the Oak of Reformation, beneath which he had held his court, and administered justice.

The whole scene reappeared before him—the crowded camp, with its turf-built huts and wild hordes; the mighty oak, the vast assemblage, the judges and captives, beneath its spreading branches!

Suddenly the roar of a cannon burst on his ears, and all vanished.

A noose was flung over his head, and,

seized by several strong hands, he was thrown over the battlements, and in another instant was swinging above the deep abyss, in sight of the thousands of spectators.

A shout then arose, that seemed to spread from street to street, from roof to roof, from tower to tower, from gate to gate, and continued for full five minutes without intermission.

But this tremendous shout did not reach Ket's ears. He was gone before it commenced.

During the remainder of the day—long remembered in Norwich, and scarcely now forgotten—he was left swinging from the battlements—a terrible spectacle that attracted the general gaze.

Cut down at night, he was buried in the vaults of the castle.

On the same day, and at the same hour, William Ket was hanged from the summit of the lofty spire of Wymondham Church, and died as courageously as his brother.

XX.

HOW THE BAGS OF TREASURE WERE FOUND BY AUGUSTIN
AND FLOWERDEW AND CARRIED OFF.

Two days afterwards Augustin Stewart rode over to Hethersett, having resolved to inform Flowerdew of the communication made by Ket respecting the treasure hidden on Household Heath.

He found the old mansion refurnished, and restored to its former state, all the damage done by the insurgents having been repaired.

The servants had likewise returned. The porter appeared at the gate as heretofore, and Harling, the stewart, welcomed him on his arrival. But Margaret was still absent.

When the matter was mentioned to him by Augustin, Flowerdew became at once deeply interested.

Digging for treasure was his great passion. He even exhumed coffins, as we have already shown, for the sake of the lead. But when the large amount of treasure was explained to him by Augustin, he could scarcely control his excitement, and at once volunteered to assist him in the search.

“Heaven grant it may not have been already discovered and carried off!” he exclaimed.

“I do not think that likely,” said Augustin. “I went yesterday to look at the

spot, and it appeared not to have been disturbed."

"Did you easily discover the tree?" inquired Flowerdew.

"I walked to it at once," replied Augustin. "'Tis an old oak, and stands about half a mile beyond the famous tree."

"We will visit it to-night, if you think proper," said Flowerdew. "I shall be delighted to assist you, and can furnish the very men you require—Caister, the old sexton belonging to my church, and his mates, trusty fellows, who will do the work you require for a small fee. Shall we go to-night? I will send the three men I have mentioned with spades and pickaxes, and a light cart, to Household Heath."

"I like the plan," remarked Augustin. "But are you sure they can be trusted?"

"I will answer for them," replied Flower-

dew. "Besides, I shall not tell them we are going to dig for treasure."

"But they will suspect it," said Augustin.

"No matter. I will make them hold their tongues. Safer men cannot be found."

"Well, I am content to leave the matter to you," said Augustin.

"It will take them two hours to get there, since they will have to cross Helleidon Bridge," rejoined Flowerdew. "They shall set out from here with the cart, and all necessary implements, at ten o'clock, and wait for us near the Oak of Reformation, where we will meet them at midnight. Shall it be so?"

"Nothing can be better," said Augustin. "The work cannot occupy us long."

"There would be ample time were the treasure double the amount," laughed

Flowerdew. “I will go and give the necessary directions at once. Come with me, and you will see the sexton.”

They then went forth, and crossing the drawbridge, proceeded to the church.

Caister, the old sexton, was soon found, and seemed greatly pleased by the job—especially as he understood he was to be well paid. He answered for his mates, and undertook to be at the appointed place at a quarter before midnight.

Having made this arrangement, the two gentlemen returned to the house.

Midnight was tolled forth by the cathedral bell as Augustin Stewart and Flowerdew, both of whom were armed, rode along Household Heath, and drew near the Oak of Reformation.

Populous as a small town not many

months ago, the heath was now entirely deserted at night.

It had an ill reputation, and was said to be haunted by the perturbed spirits of the nine rebels who had been hanged in irons on the branches of the mighty oak.

The night was dark, but clear ; and as the two horsemen approached the tree, they could distinguish the bodies dangling from the branches.

But they did not concern themselves with this ghastly sight. They looked out for the living men they expected to find there, and were disappointed not to perceive them.

However, they soon descried the cart about a bow-shot off, and hastened towards it.

“ Your honour must excuse us for not

staying near the tree," said Caister. " But the strange noises we heard scared us away. We thought a legion of demons had assembled there."

" We heard no noises," remarked Flower-dew. " But be not alarmed; we are not going to stop here."

On this, he and Augustin rode slowly on, and were followed by the men with the cart.

The heath seemed quite solitary. No one was visible, and nothing occurred to cause them alarm.

After proceeding thus for nearly a mile, they came to an oak of considerable size, though not to be compared with the majestic tree they had just quitted.

" Beneath that tree the treasure ought to be found," remarked Augustin, in a low tone to his companion.

Flowerdew immediately sprang from his horse, and called to the others :

“ Dig here ! ”

In another instant they were at work. Pickaxe and spade were vigorously plied under the superintendence of Flowerdew, who now seemed greatly excited.

For some time nothing was discovered ; but they were encouraged to proceed, since it was evident the ground had been recently turned over.

At length, old Caister’s spade struck something hard ; and, next moment, a stout leather bag, almost as big as a sack, and evidently choke-full of coin, was pulled out—not by the sexton, for it was too heavy for him—but by his two assistants.

Nothing could exceed Flowerdew’s rapture when he beheld this bag.

He seized it at once, and, heavy as it was, conveyed it to the cart.

Before he got back, another bag, quite as heavy as the first, had been brought out and placed on one side by Augustin, who had now dismounted.

In another minute, a third bag was produced, and then a fourth.

Stimulated by their success, the exertions of the workers were redoubled, and rewarded by eight more bags, some of them being even larger and heavier than the first.

After this, nothing more was found, though the search was continued for some time.

The whole of the bags were then placed in the little cart, and completely filled it.

Not till the hole in which the treasure had been deposited was carefully filled up, and the turf restored, as nearly as possible

to its pristine appearance, would Flowerdew think of departure.

He then turned to Augustin, who was standing at a little distance, and told him all was ready ; but, no notice being taken of the intimation by the young man, he inquired what was the matter with him.

“ A sight I have just beheld deprived me, for the moment, of the power of speech,” replied Augustin. “ You will scarce credit me when I tell you I have seen Ket.”

“ Indeed !” exclaimed Flowerdew, who was not free from superstitious terror.

“ I saw him as plainly as I now behold you,” replied Augustin. “ He looked exactly as he did when I talked with him concerning this treasure. But he pointed towards the city. I know not what the gesture signified.”

“ Nor can I guess,” rejoined Flowerdew.

“ We will talk of this to-morrow. We must not tarry here longer now.”

Conquering his fears, Augustin sprang on his steed, and placed himself on one side the cart, while Flowerdew rode on the other side.

In this manner they quitted Household Heath, and took their way through a long series of lanes, and across two or three wide commons to Hethersett, where they arrived just as it grew light.

But Flowerdew would not rest a moment till he had unloaded the cart and placed all the bags of treasure safely in his own room.

XXI.

HOW AUGUSTIN WENT TO YARMOUTH TO HIRE A VESSEL
FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF THE TREASURE TO LONDON.

FATIGUED by his nocturnal expedition, Augustin did not make his appearance in the dining-hall until a somewhat late hour ; but he found that Flowerdew had been astir long enough to examine the contents of the whole of the bags of treasure.

“I could not rest with those wonderful bags near me,” said Flowerdew. “So I got up and untied them all, took out a handful of gold pieces from each, and laid

them on the table, that I might count them, and feast my eyes with the splendid sight. I had taken fifty rose-nobles from each bag, so that six hundred were spread out before me—six hundred beauties! Had you beheld the glittering heap, you would have been equally enraptured. But when I reflected how many handfuls each bag contained, I was lost in wonder and admiration. I did not think there had been so much gold in the whole county. I wonder how Ket got it all?"

"By plundering the houses of the nobles and gentlemen," replied Augustin. "You yourself, I make no doubt, have contributed your share to the amount."

"No; I know my own gold," said Flowerdew. "I had no rose-nobles so bright as these, nor do I believe our Norfolk gentlemen had so much gold among

them. Moreover, I fancied Ket divided the plunder among his followers. But it seems he was wise enough to reserve the gold for himself."

"Perhaps this treasure may have been intended for division hereafter," said Augustin. "But since all the leaders are destroyed, it has been left."

"I am right glad of it," said Flowerdew. "But Ket evidently regarded it as his own, since he bestowed it on you."

"I shall not take it," said Augustin. "As I have said, it is my intention to offer it to the Duke of Somerset, to whom it may prove highly serviceable at this juncture."

"Hereafter, I am certain you will repent throwing away this large sum which you now have securely in your hands," said Flowerdew. "But, since you are resolved

not to keep it, 'tis better the Duke of Somerset should have it than any one else."

"Ket himself thought so," observed Augustin. "He regarded the duke as a friend."

"And with good reason," rejoined Flowerdew. "Had Somerset remained in power, Ket would have been pardoned. The Protector supported the commons against the nobles and gentlemen."

"Since I have served the duke, I have become devoted to him," said Augustin, "He has shown me much kindness."

"Now you can repay it all, and make his grace your debtor," said Flowerdew. "But I still advise you to reflect, ere it be too late."

"I do not need to reflect," rejoined Augustin. "My mind is made up. I shall

set out to London to-day, and take the treasure with me."

" You speak as if the matter could be easily accomplished," said Flowerdew.
" Pray, how will you take the bags?"

" In much the same way that we brought them here from Household Heath," replied Augustin. " And I hope you will consent to go with me?"

" Yes ; I will accompany you," rejoined Flowerdew. " I want to see my daughter."

" Then you could not have a better opportunity," said Augustin. " She is staying with the Duchess of Somerset at Sion House, and it is thither I intend to take the treasure."

" I guessed as much," replied Flowerdew.
" But you must not attempt to take it in the manner you propose, or you will infallibly lose it. The only safe plan will be to

hire a barque at Yarmouth, and convey the bags in it to London."

"You are right!" cried Augustin. "I will adopt the plan you suggest. I will ride to Yarmouth at once. If I find a vessel that will suit me, we will start at an early hour to-morrow morning."

"You are quite certain to meet with a sloop, or a small schooner," said Flowerdew; "therefore, it will be needless to come back with the information. I will bring the bags to Yarmouth to-night, and will meet you at the 'Bear' at ten o'clock, when they can be put on board the schooner, or sloop, or whatever it may be, without delay."

"An excellent plan!" exclaimed Augustin. "Unluckily, I have left my valise at Norwich, at the old hostel in Eye

Bridge-street, and I must needs take it with me."

" Give yourself no concern about it," said Flowerdew. " I will send one of my men for it, and bring it with me to Yarmouth. And now let us get something to eat."

During their colloquy, a substantial breakfast—such as our ancestors delighted in—had been placed by Harling at the upper end of the long oak table, and they now went there to partake of it.

Some further discussion took place during the repast, and Flowerdew said :

" There is a certain Captain Stebbing, whom I know very well—a trusty fellow, who owns a sloop called the *Carron*. If he should chance to be in the harbour now, his vessel will exactly suit you."

“ I will inquire for him immediately on my arrival,” said Augustin.

After a final inspection of the treasure, made at Flowerdew’s request, Augustin mounted his steed, and rode off to Yarmouth, reaching his destination in about two hours and a half.

XXII.

HOW THE TREASURE WAS TAKEN ON BOARD THE CARRON.

HAVING dismounted at the “Bear,” which was situated on the quay, and delivered his horse to a groom, with strict injunctions that he should be well fed, he inquired of the host, who had just made his appearance, whether Captain Stebbing was in the harbour at the time.

“ Captain Stebbing is in my house at this very moment,” replied the host.

“ That is fortunate,” replied Augustin. “ I should like to speak with him.”

“ If your honour will please to step into

this room I will bring the captain to you," said the host, showing him into a comfortable chamber.

" And bring a flask of canary at the same time," said Augustin.

The landlord withdrew, but presently reappeared with a flask of wine and a couple of tall glasses, which he set down on the table.

" Where is Captain Stebbing?" asked Augustin.

" Here he is, sir, at your service," responded a stout, weather-beaten personage, in a sailor's garb, entering the room as he spoke.

" Glad to see you, captain!" said Augustin, shaking hands with him. " Pray sit down, and take a glass of wine."

The captain willingly complied, and Augustin continued :

“ You have been recommended to me by Master Flowerdew, of Hethersett, captain. Is the *Carron* in the harbour ?”

“ She is just opposite this house, sir,” replied Captain Stebbing. “ You can see her if you step outside. A handy little craft, and a quick sailer. I start for the port of London in three days. May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing ?”

“ I am named Augustin Stewart,” replied the other.

“ Deputy mayor of Norwich during the rebellion ?”

“ The same.”

“ Proud to meet you, sir ! Here’s your health ? Can I do anything for you, sir ?”

“ Yes ; you can take me to London in the *Carron*. But you must start betimes to-morrow morning.”

“ Quite impossible, Master Stewart. I’ve

not got half my cargo on board. I should lose ten pounds."

" You shall gain thirty, captain. I want to hire the vessel. Will you take me for that sum?"

" For thirty pounds? That I will—right gladly, Master Stewart! And sail at your own time, sir—to-night, if you wish it."

" To-morrow morning will be soon enough," rejoined Augustin. " Master Flowerdew is going with me, and he won't be here till late. We have some heavy bags to take with us."

" So much the better—they will serve for ballast," laughed Captain Stebbing. " Well, I shall be right glad of Master Flowerdew's company."

" And he will be equally glad to sail with you—that I can promise you, captain. Drink his health!"

“With pleasure!” replied Stebbing, emptying his glass. “What time do you look for him here?”

“At ten o’clock; and I should like to get the bags on board at once.”

“It shall be done,” replied Stebbing. “Two of my men shall be in waiting with a boat to take them to the *Carron*.”

“Be there yourself, captain. See them safely placed in the cabin, and kept under lock and key till we come on board.”

“Treasure?” exclaimed the captain, with a knowing wink.

“No matter what it is—you must look to it.”

“That I will!” said the honest fellow. “You may rely on Jack Stebbing.”

“When you have made all safe, you can come here and sup with us,” said Augustin.

“ Much obliged, sir,” replied Stebbing. “ But I think I had best stay on board, and look after the *treasure*.”

“ Well, perhaps you had,” said Augustin.

After some further discourse, during which the captain finished the flask of canary, Augustin summoned the host, and ordered a good supper to be ready for himself and Master Flowerdew at ten o’clock, and another good supper for Caister and his companions at the same hour.

He then went forth with Captain Stebbing to look at the *Carron*.

There was a good deal of shipping in the port at the time, but he instantly perceived the little vessel, and was very much pleased with her appearance.

“ Come on board, and have a look at her, Master Stewart,” said the captain. “ I don’t think she’ll disappoint you.”

Augustin readily consented. Whereupon Captain Stebbing hailed a sailor whom he saw on deck, and a boat was speedily lowered and conveyed them to the sloop.

The *Carron* did her captain great credit. Armed with one gun, very clean, and in excellent order, she had a trim look that bespoke her an admirable sea-boat.

Her crew consisted of half a dozen men, all young and active. Captain Stebbing informed them that the ship had been hired by Master Augustin Stewart to take him and a friend to London, and that they must be ready to start at an early hour in the morning, on which they replied that they should be ready at any time they were required.

Having remained for some little time on deck, and expressed his great satisfaction with all he beheld, Augustin went into the

chief cabin, which proved larger and more convenient than he anticipated.

It was clear there would be ample room for the bags; and, satisfied on this point, he felt perfectly easy. He could not refuse the hospitality offered him by the captain, but partook of some fried ruffins, an exquisite fish peculiar to the Yare, and washed them down with some capital Bordeaux.

By this time, a good understanding had been established between Captain Stebbing and himself, and when they came on board again, they talked over matters in a very friendly manner, and the captain offered to lend him all the assistance in his power to accomplish the safe conveyance of the treasure to London, or to any place on the Thames he might desire to take it.

Augustin remained on board as long as

it was light, being highly amused by the lively scene presented by the port. He was also very much diverted by the Norfolk "trolls," or "Harry carriers," as these strange cars were then styled, as they passed to and fro along the quay.

When it grew dark, he went ashore with the captain, and they proceeded to the "Bear," where they remained till ten o'clock was tolled forth by the church of Saint Nicholas.

They then went forth, but Flowerdew had not arrived. However, some five minutes later, he appeared on the quay, but accompanied by a "Harry carrier," instead of his own cart, which, it appeared, had broken down, just as he had entered Yarmouth.

Had the accident occurred at some distance from the town, it would have caused

great inconvenience ; but none was experienced, since a “troll” came to the rescue and brought on the bags and baggage.

Without delay, these were placed in the boat, which was waiting for them, and taken on board the *Carron*, under the personal superintendence of Captain Stebbing.

This done, Augustin took Flowerdew to the “Bear,” where they found an excellent supper ready for them ; and long before they had finished it, Caister and his companions arrived with the cart, which they had got repaired.

Under the circumstances, the good supper provided for them by Augustin proved very acceptable, and they were exceedingly well satisfied with the handsome gratuity bestowed upon them by Flowerdew.

They started on their return to Hethersett at an early hour next morning, taking with them the gentlemen's hackneys, and their own horse and cart.

XXIII.

SION HOUSE.

BEFORE quitting Yarmouth, Caister and his companions looked for the *Carron* in the harbour, but she was not to be seen. Captain Stebbing had sailed more than an hour previously, and at that very moment was passing by Lowestoft with a favourable breeze.

“If this wind holds,” he said to Augustin, “we shall be at the mouth of the Thames by six o’clock to-morrow morning.”

Nor was he out in his calculation. By the time he had mentioned, the *Carron*, with the treasure on board, had passed the Nore.

The day being fine Augustin and Flowerdew kept almost entirely on deck, and had a good deal of talk with the captain, who pointed out all the objects of interest to them. Thus the time passed very agreeably, and the voyage had all the charm of an excursion.

Very different, of course, was the Thames of that day from the present crowded river; but even then more ships were to be seen, and of larger size than might be supposed.

Towards evening, the passengers approached Greenwich, and learnt from the royal standard floating on one of the towers, that the king was staying at the palace.

Continuing their course up the river, they arrived off the Tower; but not till night had come on, and, owing to the gloom, the stern fortress could scarcely be distinguished, and appeared like a heavy black mass.

London Bridge, which seemed to bar their further progress, presented a very curious sight, most of the tall and picturesque houses then built upon it being lighted up.

Here they anchored for the night, Captain Stebbing having agreed to take his vessel up the river to Sion House at an early hour in the morning.

Before coming to this determination, Augustin had landed, and ascertained from the guard that the Duke of Somerset had quitted the Tower on that very day, and been conveyed in his own barge to Sion House, a

noble mansion recently erected by him, and situated on the banks of the Thames, between Brentford and Isleworth, and almost opposite the royal palace of Shene.

Before Saint Paul's had tolled six, the sloop had passed through the central arch of London Bridge, and was sailing up the river, past Queenhithe and Paul's Wharf, past Somerset House and the Savoy, past Whitehall and Westminster, and so onwards in the direction of Brentford.

As the morning was exceedingly fine, the sail could not be otherwise than delightful, and the two gentlemen greatly enjoyed it.

While they are still pursuing their slow course up the beautiful river, gazing at its banks from the deck, we shall precede them, and briefly describe the magnificent mansion towards which they were bound.

Built on the site of the convent of Bridgettines, founded in 1414, by Henry the Fifth, Sion House had only been completed about a year ago by the proud Duke of Somerset, who at that time seemed to have as many palaces as his royal nephew.

The old convent was among the first religious houses suppressed by Henry the Eighth, who envied the poor nuns their charming abode, facing, as it did, his palace at Shene, but he left the structure untenanted.

On his royal father's death Edward bestowed the deserted convent on the Protector, who immediately pulled it down, together with the antique fane near it, and in a marvellously short space of time reared a vast mansion, or rather palace, on the site.

Quadrangular in shape, and built of white

stone, Sion House had a very grand and majestic appearance. Internally, there was a large square court, capable of holding a large number of men. The roof was flat and surrounded with battlements, so that cannon could be placed upon it. At each angle there was a large square tower, embattled like the roof, and capable of being armed.

The mansion boasted some noble apartments which were sumptuously furnished ; and it likewise contained as much accommodation for soldiers as a garrison.

The east front, which commanded a charming view of the Thames, with the palace of Shene and the heights of Richmond, was supported by arches. On this side were two magnificent gardens laid out in the old formal style, and each occupying a large square area. Between them

the Duke of Somerset had reared a very high triangular terrace, that overlooked the river and the charming scenery around, but which his enemies declared must have been intended as a fortification, since terraces were never so planned. It certainly appeared as if the terrace could easily be converted into a battery.

From the gardens, a beautiful lawn sloped down to the edge of the Thames.

Such was Sion House at the period of our story, when, as already stated, it had not been long finished. No nobler mansion could be seen near this part of the Thames. Of course it could not compare for a moment with Hampton Court; but in some respects it was superior to Shene.

On the morning in question, when the *Carron* was making her way thither with

the treasure on board, it chanced that the Duke of Somerset and the duchess were walking on the high triangular terrace just described.

Having so recently been a captive in the Tower, the duke had come forth at an early hour to enjoy the charming scene, and the duchess accompanied him.

They had been pacing to and fro for some time, talking about the heavy fine which the duke had to pay in a few days, when they noticed the little sloop coming up the river, and stood still to watch her.

“That barque looks as if she were bringing me something,” said the duke.

“I would she were bringing you money to pay the fine,” observed the duchess.

“I would so, too,” said the duke; “but that is not likely.”

“ See !” cried the duchess. “ They are taking down their sails and throwing out the anchor.”

“ It looks as if they were going to land here,” said the duke.

“ They are !” cried the duchess. “ They are preparing to lower the boat. Let us go and see what they are about.”

With this, they descended from the lofty terrace, and walked down the lawn towards the bank of the river.

Augustin had already landed. Before quitting the barque he had recognised the noble pair, and now hastened to meet them.

“ As I live, it is Augustin Stewart !” exclaimed the duke, halting.

“ Your grace is right,” rejoined the young man, saluting them ; “ and I am happy to say that I do not come empty-handed. I

bring your grace wherewithal to pay the heavy fine imposed upon you."

"Did I not say as much?" cried the duchess. "I felt that that barque was laden with treasure."

"'Tis strange your grace should have such a presentiment," rejoined Augustin. "But so it is."

"Explain yourself?" cried the duke, eagerly.

"In yonder vessel," replied Augustin, "I have ten thousand pounds in gold, which is destined for your grace."

"Amazement!" cried the duke. "But whence comes the money?"

"'Tis a legacy from Ket," replied Augustin.

"From Ket, the rebel leader?" cried the duke.

“Ay, from him,” replied Augustin. “I am bound to speak the truth.”

He then explained how the treasure had been obtained; and the noble pair listened in wonder to his narration.

“This is strange, indeed!” exclaimed Somerset, when Augustin concluded.

“It proves beyond question that fortune still favours your grace,” said the young man, “and that you will soon triumph over your enemies.”

Somerset seemed lost in reflection for a few moments. He then turned to the duchess, and said :

“Ought I to accept this money?”

“Accept it! Ay!” she replied. “It has come in the very nick of time, and when most needed. Return, I pray you, to the house, and send some of the servants

hither. I will stay to receive the treasure."

The duke willingly assented to the proposition, and left the entire management of the matter to the duchess, who saw the bags landed, and had them conveyed by her own servants to the mansion, where they were safely locked up by the duke, who, by this time, had become sufficiently alive to the importance of the affair.

Augustin and Flowerdew remained as guests at the house, the latter being made happy by meeting his daughter; while Captain Stebbing, having received the sum promised him by Augustin, sailed back to London, perfectly satisfied with the result of his voyage.

End of Book the Second.

Book the Third.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

I.

HOW AUGUSTIN STEWART WAS APPOINTED THE DUKE OF SOMERSET'S PRIVATE SECRETARY.

ANXIOUS to evince his gratitude, the Duke of Somerset took Augustin Stewart to his cabinet, in order to have some private conversation with him.

“I have not been able to thank you sufficiently for the important service you have rendered me,” he said. “How can I requite it?”

“I desire only to remain with your grace,” replied Augustin. “Possibly I may be useful.”

“I have no doubt of it,” said the duke; “and in order to have you constantly near me, I appoint you my chief secretary. Should I ever regain my former power—as I may,” he added, significantly, “the post will be worth having.”

“It far exceeds my ambition,” replied Augustin, bowing profoundly.

“I have the utmost confidence in you,” pursued the duke. “You will begin your duties to-morrow.”

Augustin again bowed.

“I am also greatly beholden to Master Flowerdew for what he has done,” said the duke. “Invite him, I pray you, in my name, to stay at Sion House as long as he pleases. He shall always have a room in the palace. Have you seen his daughter since your arrival?”

“I have seen her, your grace, but have not yet exchanged a word with her.”

“You are betrothed to her, and with her father’s consent—is it not so?”

“It is, your grace. But I do not think our union will take place at present.”

“Wherefore not?” demanded the duke.

“It is Margaret’s wish that the marriage should be deferred.”

“Is there any obstacle?”

“I know of none, your grace.”

“Then why should she desire delay?”

“I cannot answer the question, your grace,” replied Augustin.

“The duchess, and my daughter, the Lady Anne, are greatly attached to the fair damsel, and may not like to part with her. But that is no reason why your happiness should be interfered with; and if you desire it, I will speak to them.”

“I thank your grace,” rejoined Augustin. “But perhaps it will be best to consult with Margaret herself, before I avail myself of the offer. She may have some reasons for delay, with which I am unacquainted.”

“Go to her, then; and when you have ascertained her feelings, I will act as you suggest. Send her father to me, should you find him with her. I have to thank him, and shall take the opportunity of informing him that I have appointed you my secretary.”

Augustin bowed his thanks, and quitted the cabinet.

Half an hour afterwards he was walking with Margaret on the terrace. They had much to say to each other, and Augustin fancied there was a change in her manner toward him; but, though hurt, he did not reproach her.

At last he stopped, and taking her hand, said :

“Your father is now here. I am appointed the duke’s secretary. Why should not our marriage take place forthwith ?”

“I am obliged to say ‘no !’” she rejoined. “Press me not for my reasons ; I cannot give them.”

Augustin gazed at her in astonishment, scarcely believing he had heard aright.

“I was not deceived !” he cried, at length, with some bitterness. “I thought your manner changed. You have ceased to love me.”

“You are mistaken,” she replied, in a low, sad tone. “I love you as dearly as ever.”

“Then why this change ?” he cried. “You are not like your former self. Have I done aught to forfeit your affection ?”

“Nothing,” she replied. “The fault is not yours.”

“Then there is a fault,” he cried. “What has happened? Keep me not in this cruel state of suspense!”

“I have just said that I can give you no explanation; and I pray you to be content!”

Augustin looked completely bewildered.

“Have some pity for me,” he said.

“I pity you from my heart, dear Augustin,” she said; “but I am unable to relieve your anxiety. My conduct must appear unfeeling and inexplicable—that I am aware—but I cannot help it; and should you desire it, I will release you from your engagement to me.”

“No; that would only make me more wretched than I am now,” he cried. “But is there no hope for the future?”

“Yes;” she replied, earnestly. “All may come right.”

“Then I will bear up as well as I can,” he said, resolutely. “However much I may suffer, you shall hear no further complaint from me.”

“Say nought to my father, I entreat you! He will chide me severely, and try to force me into compliance with his injunctions.”

“Rather than that, I will take all blame upon myself,” said Augustin.

“You are ever generous,” cried Margaret. “I ought not to put your devotion to such a test, but I cannot help it.”

At this juncture, Lord Lisle and the Lady Anne Seymour appeared on the terrace. On beholding Margaret, the Lady Anne immediately ran towards her.

“I have good news for you,” she cried.

“The Earl of Warwick has given his consent to the marriage. The duke, my father, cannot refuse now, since his majesty is with us.”

“No ; all difficulties seem to have disappeared, and I trust your marriage will take place immediately,” said Margaret.

“My satisfaction will be complete if another marriage can take place at the same time,” said the Lady Anne. “Shall it be so ?”

“Impossible,” rejoined Margaret.

“Why impossible ?” cried the Lady Anne. “I thought Augustin Stewart had come to claim you, and had brought your father with him to prevent any more delay.”

“Our marriage, I grieve to say, seems farther off than ever,” observed Augustin.

“But why should it be ?” said the Lady Anne. “If Master Flowerdew is obdu-

rate, Lord Lisle undertakes to soften him down."

"I have no doubt of your ladyship's power," said Augustin. "But it is not needed in his case. His consent has long since been obtained."

"Where, then, does the difficulty lie?" asked the Lady Anne. "Surely there has been no quarrel? If so, it must be my business to set it right."

At this moment, Lord Lisle, who was standing at a little distance, called out:

"The king! the king! Do you not perceive that his majesty is coming over from Shene?"

All eyes were instantly turned towards the river. The royal barge was nearly half-way across.

"This is a most fortunate circumstance," said the Lady Anne, as Lord Lisle came up.

“ But it will be still more fortunate if your father, the Earl of Warwick, should be with his majesty.”

“ I feel certain he is with him,” replied Lord Lisle. “ He went to Shene Palace early this morning with my brother, Robert Dudley.”

“ Then I doubt not we shall see them here anon,” said the Lady Anne.

II.

HOW AUGUSTIN STEWART WAS KNIGHTED BY THE KING.

MEANWHILE, the Duke of Somerset had been informed of his majesty's visit; and, accompanied by the duchess and a large train of servants, hastened to the landing-place, where he arrived just in time to receive the king as he stepped on shore.

Edward, who seemed in a very good humour, graciously accorded him his hand, and then turned to the duchess, allowing the duke an opportunity of welcoming the

Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Worcester, Lord Gray of Wilton, Lord William Howard, the Lords Robert Dudley, Fitzwaters, Bray, Abergavenny, and other young nobles who formed the royal party.

From the remarkable courtesy shown to each other by Somerset and Warwick, it would have been difficult to suppose that a deadly enmity had recently existed between them, and was now, perhaps, scarcely extinguished.

While the young king was ceremoniously conducted towards the palace, reverences were made to his majesty by those who had recently been watching his landing from the terrace, as well as by Flowerdew.

Edward immediately stopped to speak to Lord Lisle.

“ I am glad to find you here, my lord,”

he remarked, in a very friendly tone. “ I have something to say to you. Indeed, I have come here chiefly on your account.”

“ Indeed, my liege!” said Lord Lisle, affecting to misunderstand him.

“ Not on your account alone,” replied Edward, smiling. “ Our fair cousin, the Lady Anne, is as much concerned in the matter as yourself.”

Then addressing the Duke of Somerset, he added :

“ Before entering the palace, we will tarry for a short space on this pleasant lawn. Ere many days, a marriage is to take place at Shene, and I am come to bid you all to it.”

“ I have heard of no marriage, my liege, observed the Earl of Warwick.

“ Nor I,” said the Duke of Somerset.

“ Yet you are both principals, and must

assist at the ceremonial," said the king. " Nay, without your joint consent the marriage cannot take place, although ourself should enjoin it, seeing that the intended bride is daughter to your grace, and the bridegroom that is to be, if all goes well, your lordship's eldest son."

"After this expression of your majesty's wishes," said the Duke of Somerset, "there could be no opposition on my part to the proposed marriage, even if I were dissatisfied with it, which is not the case. Nay, I like it well," he added, emphatically, "and at once give my assent."

"And mine is given with equal cordiality," said Warwick. "My son's happiness, I am well aware, depends upon his union with the Lady Anne Seymour, on whom his heart is fixed; and he could

have made no choice that would have pleased me better."

"Nor is there a youthful noble in the land whom I would prefer as a son-in-law to Lord Lisle," said Somerset.

Edward looked highly pleased with these responses.

Lord Lisle then took the Lady Anne's hand, and leading her towards the king, they both knelt before him, and offered heartfelt thanks for his gracious interference.

"And now, since all is settled," said the king, "let us fix the day on which the marriage shall take place. Shall it be this day week, or earlier?" he added to the Lady Anne.

"Not earlier, please your majesty!" she replied.

“Nor later, I entreat, my liege!” cried Lord Lisle.

“Then we will adhere to that day,” said Edward. “The espousals shall take place at Shene, under our auspices, for our sweet cousin Anne is dear to us as a sister. His Grace of Canterbury, I am certain, will be well pleased to perform the ceremony.”

“Your majesty has spoken for me as I would speak for myself,” said Cranmer. “I shall rejoice to officiate on an occasion which will unite two such illustrious families as those of Somerset and Warwick. May all differences between them be healed! May they be indissolubly united!”

“Amen!” exclaimed Edward.

“My liege,” remarked Somerset, “I will take this opportunity of saying a word to your majesty in behalf of a most honour-

able and deserving gentleman, Master Augustin Stewart, of Norwich, who is now present. He was deputy mayor of Norwich during the rebellion, and, I firmly believe, saved the city from destruction when it was in the hands of the insurgents. Yet nothing has been done for him. Master Flowerdew, of Hethersett, near Norwich, who is likewise present, will confirm what I have stated."

"Bid both gentlemen come forward," said Edward.

Thereupon Flowerdew and Augustin advanced, and bent before the king.

"Have you aught to say respecting Master Stewart?" said Edward to Flowerdew.

"Only this, my liege—that the great services rendered by him to Norwich during the rebellion have never been requited—

scarcely recognised. He paid a very large sum to Ket for the release of the prisoners from Mount Surrey."

"Is this so?" asked Edward, surprised.

"It is, my liege," replied Somerset; "and I greatly reproach myself for the neglect."

"I desire no reward," said Augustin. "I simply discharged my duty."

"You discharged it well, sir," remarked Warwick. "That I can avouch."

"Some amends shall be made for the neglect without delay," cried the king.

Bidding the young man kneel down, he laid his sword upon his shoulder, and said:

"Arise, Sir Augustin! We have conferred the honour of knighthood upon you in consideration of the services you have rendered our good city of Norwich."

So gracefully performed was the action that it charmed all who beheld it.

It will be readily understood with what feelings the newly-made knight sprang to his feet.

All had occurred so suddenly that he could scarcely believe such a distinction had been conferred upon him. He essayed to speak, but words failed him, and he could only express his gratitude by his looks, but they told what was passing in his breast, and pleased the young monarch better than the most elaborate address could have done.

Edward's gracious act gave general satisfaction. That Margaret was delighted need not be said; and her father, who was sincerely attached to the young man, was equally well pleased. Congratulations from all sides rang in the ears of the new-made

knight; none sincerer than those of the Lady Anne Seymour and her destined spouse.

“Must our marriage now be delayed?” whispered Sir Augustin to Margaret.

“Alas! yes,” was the reply.

END OF VOL. II.

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